Complexity and diversity in the late iron age southern Levant: the investigation of 'Edomite' archaeology and scholarly discourse

Whiting, Charlotte M.

Complexity and Diversity in the Late Iron Age Southern Levant: The Investigation of 'Edomite' Archaeology and Scholarly Discourse

Charlotte M. Whiting
Department of Archaeology
University of Durham

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Volume One

To Mum, Dad, and Barnes

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Volume Two

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Abstract

This thesis aims to reassess the principal concepts used by archaeologists in their attempts to interpret the late Iron Age archaeology of southern Israel and Jordan. This study focuses in particular on the archaeological remains that have traditionally been associated with the 'Edomites' mentioned in the Old Testament. This reassessment involves examining two inter-related themes. The first is largely historiographical, the aim being to highlight the socio-political and intellectual contexts in which the study of the 'Edomites' became an important discourse. This is achieved by contextualising both the beginnings of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology as a whole and the archaeological investigation of the 'Edomites', as well as the study of the historical sources that mention 'Edom' and the 'Edomites'.

The second theme concerns the material culture used by archaeologists to address questions regarding the 'Edomites', such as the areas they spread to, whether they spread by migration, invasion, or trade, and the nature of their kingdom and religion. Firstly, the theoretical underpinnings of these archaeological approaches is reassessed. Building on that, an analysis of what is traditionally interpreted as 'Edomite' pottery – material that has been commonly used to address the questions posed above – is presented. This analysis focuses on the ways in which this type of pottery was used, and where possible, the contexts in which it was deposited/found, thus highlighting how people in the past used it as part of specific social practices. The results demonstrate that the pattern of material culture usually thought to underpin traditional understandings of 'Edomite' archaeology is actually quite varied and that 'Edomite' ethnicity may not be the best explanation for such diversity. Following the critique of the discourse of 'Edomite' archaeology, a number of alternative ways in which the late Iron Age material culture of the southern Levant might be understood are suggested. These alternatives focus on theories of practice, appropriation, and foodways.

Declaration

The Graduate School Committee has given approval for the submission of this thesis that does not conform to the prescribed word length for the degree in question. The thesis is 15,000 words in excess of the word limit. In all other respects this thesis conforms to Durham University's 'Rules for the Submission of Work for Higher Degrees'.

This thesis is the result of my own work. None of the material presented here has previously been submitted by the author for a degree at the University of Durham or at any other university. Material from the work of others has been acknowledged and quotations and paraphrases have been indicated.

Statement of Copyright

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LIST OF FIGURES

The figures not listed below were produced by the author. These include Figures 1, 6a, 6b, 12a, 12b, 12c, 29-32, 41, 43, 44-48, 62, and 68-178. The individual ceramic illustrations in Figures 49-61 and 63-67 were collected by the author from references that are cited below, and compiled into figures. These references also contain information on the scales not included in the figures.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Archäologischer Anzeiger
AASOR	Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research
ADAJ	Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan
APEF	Annual of the Palestine Exploration Fund
BA	Biblical Archaeologist
BAR	Biblical Archaeology Review
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
BIAL	Bulletin of the Institute of Archaeology
Bsac	Bibliotheca Sacra
EAEHL	Encyclopaedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land
EI	Eretz Israel
GM	Göttinger Miszellen
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JESHO	Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JNSL	Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages
JSOT	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament
NEAEHL	New Encyclopaedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land
OTS	Oudtestamentische Studiën
PEFQ.st.	Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement
PEQ	Palestine Exploration Quarterly
PJB	Palästinajahrbuch
RB	Revue Biblique
SHAJ	Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan
SJOT	Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament
SSAWL	Sitzungsberichte der Sächsigen Akademie der Wissenschaft zu Leipzig
TA	Tel Aviv
TLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung
TRu	Theologische Rundschau
UF	Ugarit-Forschungen
ZDPV	Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

'No country should be of so much interest to us than that in which the documents of our faith were written and the momentous events they described and enacted' (from the Palestine Exploration Fund prospectus 1865; c.f. Broshi 1987: 20).

'The work proposed by the Palestine Exploration Society appeals to the religious sentiments of the Christian and the Jew: it is of interest to the scholar of every brand of linguistic, historical, or physical investigation; but its supreme importance is for the illustration and defence of the Bible' (from the constitution of the American Palestine Exploration Society; c.f. Broshi 1987: 20).

'Not only will it open up the most fertile parts of the country, *and bring back European civilisation to where it once was supreme*, on the east of the Jordan; but if ever European arms return to the country - as, in a contest for Egypt or for the Holy Places, when they may not return? - this railway running from the coast across the central battlefield of Palestine will be of immense strategic value' (Smith 1894: 20-21; emphasis added).

'We will not exaggerate by saying that *thanks to the heroism of the Masada fighters* - like other links in the nation's chain of heroism - *we stand here today*, the soldiers of a young-ancient people, surrounded by the ruins of the camps of those who destroyed us. We stand here, no longer helpless in the face of our enemy's strength, no longer fighting a desperate war, but solid and confident, knowing that our fate is in our hands, in our spiritual strength, the spirit of Israel 'the grandfather revived [...] We, the descendants of these heroes, stand here today and rebuild the ruins of our people' (Yadin cited in Zerubavel 1995: 84).

Western Christian interest in the study of ancient Palestine took off in the nineteenth century and was consolidated in the early to mid-twentieth century by the biblical archaeology of a number of prominent western scholars. In the nineteenth century, scholars from western countries, in particular Great Britain, America, Germany, and France, travelled to the 'Holy Land' in search of the ancient Israelites and sites relating to events and peoples of the Bible. The role of religion in guiding their research is demonstrated by the statements of the Palestine Exploration Fund and the American Palestine Exploration Society. Indeed, there was an overriding tendency in the work of western scholars to focus on biblical subjects and to make connections between archaeological sites and events in the Bible. However, western scholarship in the region of Palestine was also driven by national interests. On the one hand, competition between western nation states fuelled further research in the Orient generally and Palestine in particular (Silberman 1982). On the other hand, as a result of its key role in the development of Christianity, the 'Holy Land' also figured in the construction of national origin myths amongst the emerging western nation states (Boyarin 1996; Davis 1996).

When George Adam Smith wrote his classic early treatment of historical geography *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land* (1894), many people in the West regarded the study of Palestine as providing the background and atmosphere for understanding the religious developments which were the foundation of western civilisation. The study of the southern Levant was presented in terms of its importance for western civilisation and the origins of its monotheistic faith: European powers were returning to protect the land which had provided the taproot of its own civilisation (Whitelam 1996: 41-42). Indeed, western Europe saw the Semitic Near East and Aryan Persia as monotheistic and individualistic cultures similar to the West in contrast to the Far East of India, China, and Japan. This fostered the belief that the civilisations of the ancient Near East were culturally continuous with the West (Inden 1986: 405; 1990: 50).

Such uses of the past in the construction of modern identities have had an effect on the nature of archaeological enquiry in this region. Indeed, archaeology has played a key role in substantiating the historic association of the West with the Holy Land in the construction of western national origin myths, by providing material evidence for the events and peoples of the Bible. As a result, there has been a strong bias towards the study of biblical sites, traditionally dated to the Iron Age. This bias has not only resulted in the neglect of other periods, but also, on occasions, the destruction of later archaeological horizons in order to get to those periods deemed most important (Elon 1994: 15; Glock 1994). Furthermore, present interests have not only determined which periods and sites have been researched, but also the types of questions that have been asked, and how archaeological material has been interpreted. Indeed, scholars from a western Christian background have tended to focus on issues defined by the biblical framework, by connecting particular material culture remains with specific events and figures mentioned in the biblical narrative.

The rise of Zionism and the foundation of the Jewish state in 1948 further consolidated this interest in what is regarded as the biblical period in the history of Palestine. Various factions within the Zionist movement drew upon the Biblical and Second Temple periods in constructing an image of a 'Golden Age' in the history of the Jewish people. This was used to substantiate the very existence of the Jewish nation as an historical being, adding force to the Zionist agenda in the context of nineteenth century historicism (Jones 1997b: 4). With the establishment of the modern state of Israel, such uses of the past were perpetuated. The use of antiquity in the legitimation of Israel's right to the land was particularly prominent. The past also played a key role in the construction of a common national consciousness for a population which was largely made up of immigrants from diverse regions of the diaspora with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As in the case of most nations and ethnic groups, Israeli national identity is rooted in the representation of a shared historical tradition (Hobsbawm 1983; Zerubavel 1994; 1995; Smith 1997); a tradition characterised

by common origins in 'the Land' (demarcated by the Israelite conquest/settlement of Canaan), a glorious period or 'Golden Age' (the Israelite state), and a period of oppression and/or exile from which the people have been, or will be redeemed (successive periods of domination by alien empires and eventual exile from the Land of Israel).

Archaeological research has played a crucial role in the construction of this national tradition. Indeed, it played a key role in the Zionist revival by substantiating the existence of the Jewish people as a nation and their historic association with the Land of Israel. In other words, it was used to confirm the historicity of the Bible and hence authenticate Zionist and Israeli claims within the international discourse of secular nationalism. Currently, the dominant representation of the past in Israel traces the existence of the Jewish people as a unified, homogenous nation in antiquity and makes a symbolic leap between past and present which effectively excludes the histories of other groups in the region. Yadin's linking of the ancient past and the political present in the opening quote, is an important element in the maintenance of this continuum between past and present. Indeed, the political importance of Masada is encapsulated in its choice as the location for the annual swearing-in ceremony for Israeli troops and expressed through the nationalist slogan that 'Never again shall Masada fall' (Whitelam 1996: 16; Jones 1997b: 5).

South Levantine archaeology has thus played a pivotal role in the construction of both modern western and Israeli identity. In recent years, the study of collective and personal identities has become of increasing interest in the social sciences. A range of questions - such as how to define who 'we' are both collectively and individually, the role of collective identities in human ontology (the study of 'being'), and how and why these identities are created, maintained and challenged through time - are currently of great interest to social scientists. Scholars have thus discussed the nature and construction of identities related to ethnicity, as well as age, gender, and status for example, in many different social contexts. Archaeologists are among those social scientists for whom the question of identity is an important issue and the present study is, to a large extent, a product of that trend.

Indeed, central to the use of archaeological material in the construction of group identity is the attachment of ethnic labels to particular artefacts, sites, and periods. The material culture of the Iron Age southern Levant has thus traditionally been interpreted in terms of ethnic groups, the very existence of which derive directly from Old Testament sources. This approach has led to a circular, self-referential use of historical and archaeological evidence to produce a history of ancient Israel and early Judaism and Christianity. Traditional archaeological theory - which associates material culture with ethnic groups and relies on frameworks provided by literary evidence in which to place

archaeological data - has been successfully challenged in other areas of archaeology but remains unquestioned in the study of ancient Israel. The documentary basis of Iron Age 'history' has also been criticised, again casting real doubt on the validity of current constructions of the Levantine Iron Age (Davies 1992; Thompson 1992; Whitelam 1996). This has however come from Old Testament scholars, and their treatment of archaeological data has been relatively superficial. There is thus an urgent need for a major reappraisal of the status of the archaeological data. The aim of this thesis is therefore to reassess the archaeology of the Iron Age southern Levant in line with recent developments in the study of material culture.

To address these issues, the role that archaeology has played in defining the origins of 'Edom' and 'Edomite' identity will be used as a case study (see Figure 1 for the traditional location of 'Edom' in southern Jordan). The archaeology of 'Edom' was selected for this study as it forms a data-set of suitable size to examine within the time-scale available for this thesis. Furthermore, since 'Edom' is traditionally located in late Iron Age southern Jordan - commonly dated to the seventh and sixth centuries BC - it has been studied within the overall interpretative framework of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. A reassessment of current understandings of so-called 'Edomite' archaeology will therefore serve to re-evaluate the ideas and assumptions that underpin the present interpretation of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology as a whole.

The narrative of 'Edomite' origins based around the settlement of 'Edomites', their kingdom, and their relations with Judah (traditionally located in southern Israel; see Figure 1), has its historical roots at least as far back as the late nineteenth century when it became the subject of biblical-historical research (e.g. Buhl 1893). Yet it was only in the early twentieth century that it became a subject of archaeological research. Throughout the twentieth century, the traditional narrative concerning 'Edomite' identity had a profound influence on the interpretation amongst archaeologists (and many biblical historians) of observable material culture patterning in the Iron Age archaeology of southern Jordan and Israel. To reassess these interpretations, it will be necessary to examine the relationship between archaeology and the 'Edomite' narrative; to show how and why it developed and continued to be used through time even to the present day. It is hoped that by highlighting the origins of the 'Edomite' narrative as well as its theoretical constituents we will be able to see it, not as a historical and archaeological fact, but as a product of various academic discourses. If this is the case, then the aim here is to show that there may be other ways of understanding archaeological evidence from the Iron Age southern Levant.

The proposed reassessment of the 'Edomite' narrative will involve discussing many diverse and complex issues of archaeological interpretation. These include, for example, the relationship

between material culture and social, political and cultural change, and between material culture and personal identities; explanations for the distribution of material culture; the relationship between archaeology and history; the relevance or otherwise of periodisation; the academic process and why theories change or do not change through time. All these issues will be addressed in the following chapters.

Chapter 2 will provide the background for the study as a whole, tracing the archaeological study of the Iron Age southern Levant from the early nineteenth century to the present day. This will highlight how and why archaeologists have changed their ideas about the narrative in question through time whilst also retaining a number of key ideas. These key ideas, it will be shown, mean that current conceptions of the Levantine Iron Age have never been seriously questioned. Chapter 3 will trace the archaeological study of 'Edomite' archaeology in the southern Levant in particular. This chapter will place this study into the overall framework of south Levantine Iron Age archaeological scholarship and will trace the origins and development of a number of ideas central to traditional conceptions of 'Edom' and the 'Edomites'. Chapter 4 will begin the critique of the key ideas and assumptions that underpin 'Edomite' archaeology by demonstrating that the individual historical sources used as evidence when discussing the 'Edomites' are not simply sources of factual information about the Iron Age. Instead, and in line with recent theoretical developments in historical studies, they will be interpreted as narratives created by individual authors for certain, context-specific reasons. Hence it will be shown that the sources in question may not be entirely appropriate means of interpreting Iron Age archaeological remains in the southern Levant. Chapter 5 will take a similarly critical approach to the methods of archaeological excavation, interpretation, and analysis used in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. It will be demonstrated that these methods are not only the result of the particular approach taken to archaeology in this region, but that they also play a crucial role in determining current understandings of the relationship between material culture, historical sources, and identity. Chapter 6 will complete the critique of the central ideas that form the basis of 'Edomite' archaeology by discussing the central tenets of archaeological theory concerning the relationship between material culture and identity that are required to support this idea. By doing so, many of those tenets will be shown to be questionable in the light of recent theoretical developments in the social sciences.

The archaeological study of the late Iron Age southern Levant has focused largely on settlement remains and pottery assemblages. A number of ceramic types in particular have been linked explicitly to the 'Edomites'. This pottery and, where possible, the contexts in which it was deposited, will be analysed in order to reassess current understandings of the 'Edomites' in terms of actual archaeological material, not just theoretical ideas. Chapter 7 will outline the methodology

used in this thesis, which was designed to test whether specific ceramic types do in fact support the present interpretation of the late Iron Age southern Levant. The results of the analysis using this methodology will be presented in Chapter 8. In Chapter 9 the implications of the preceeding chapters will be discussed and an interpretation of the evidence which does not rely on traditional problematic assumptions will be presented. Final conclusions will be drawn in Chapter 10.

Before continuing, it is necessary to clarify some of the geographical terms that will be used in the following chapters. The term 'southern Levant' has been used in general to designate the area presently occupied by the modern countries of Israel and Jordan. This term has been used to avoid confusion with the 'Israel' of the Old Testament and because of the political sensitivity in the area. The term Palestine has however been used in some instances in reference to the area under the British Mandate until 1948, when the state of Israel was founded. Due to traditional structures of argumentation, the analysis of data in Chapters 7, 8, and 9 is based on a comparison of groups of material from sites in southern Jordan and Israel. In these chapters the terms 'southern Israel' and 'southern Jordan' are therefore used to distinguish between the material excavated from sites in these two areas.

In addition, it is necessary to define the chronological parameters of this study. Although Chapter 2 will present a detailed historiography of general Iron Age archaeology in Israel, only late Iron Age material evidence from southern Israel and Jordan will be analysed and discussed in detail in Chapters 7, 8, and 9. This is because this study is primarily an investigation of explanations for late Iron Age material culture distributions in southern Jordan and Israel - the region in which 'Edomites' are said to have been present during the late Iron Age.

Finally, it must be stated that this study is not an attempt to describe what *really* happened in the late Iron Age southern Levant. It should instead be seen as an attempt to highlight a range of theoretical problems with south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. By raising these theoretical problems and suggesting new and different ways of approaching archaeological interpretation in this area, it is hoped that subsequent studies might investigate alternative ways of understanding late Iron Age material culture distributions that do not rely on questionable assumptions.

SECTION ONE

Research Traditions in the Iron Age Archaeology of the Southern Levant

CHAPTER TWO

Historiography of Iron Age Archaeology in Israel

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology from its inception in the nineteenth century to the present. The intention is to show how and why certain ideas about the Iron Age southern Levant came about and how they have remained a fundamental part of academic discourse to this day. This discussion forms a vital part of the present study because although current constructions of the Levantine Iron Age have been recently criticised by biblical scholars, they have done so purely from a textual perspective. The archaeological framework that has formed an integral part of these constructions has therefore not been reassessed. To evaluate current interpretations of the Levantine Iron Age, it is therefore necessary to discuss the development of Iron Age archaeology in this area. To achieve this, it will be discussed within the wider context of historical, biblical, and archaeological scholarship, as well as the political and religious climate of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

First, it will be shown that scholarly and popular concern for the southern Levant reached a height in the nineteenth century for religious, academic, and political reasons. The ensuing intense exploration of this area resulted in a specific view of the 'Holy Land' in the west, a view which greatly influenced the development of archaeology in this area. Second, by discussing the relationship between nineteenth century historical, biblical, and archaeological scholarship, the immense influence that biblical and historical studies had on the early development of archaeology in the southern Levant will be demonstrated. Third, using the first two points as a backdrop, the development of archaeological practice in this area from the late nineteenth century to the present will be discussed. Particular attention will be paid to how and why certain ideas came about, and how in many cases they have remained part of academic discourse to the present day. In discussing the origins and development of these ideas, it will be shown that in addition to the influence of broad traditions of scholarship, the complex web of inferences and conceptual links made by individual scholars also played a key role.

By discussing the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, it will therefore be demonstrated that the predominant views of the Iron Age archaeology of this region are not immutable facts, but rather ideas formed within the framework of particular temporal, socio-

political, and intellectual contexts. By showing that ideas that may appear to constitute historical or archaeological 'facts' are in fact a means of understanding the past that constitutes a discourse subjected to various political, intellectual, and social trends, the objective of this chapter is to provide an essential precursor to alternative interpretations of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology.

2.2 The Southern Levant in Christian History and Thought

2.2.1 Introduction

Throughout the practice of archaeology in the southern Levant during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Bible and the geographical areas now known as Israel, The West Bank and Jordan have been almost inseparable in the consciousness of the West. This connection has been present in western thought for centuries. For many people in the West, the thought of the southern Levant conjured up images of shepherds and olive trees, of dusty hills and donkeys, of Jerusalem as it existed at the time of King David or Bethlehem at the time of Jesus. It was a land without history, its people and places frozen in a biblical time frame. As Edward Robinson, professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York, wrote during his visit to Jerusalem at Easter in 1838:

> 'We counted it no loss [missing the events of Holy Week] ... for the object of our visit was the city itself, in relation to its ancient renown and religious associations, not as seen in its present state of decay and superstitious and fraudful degradation.'(Robinson 1977: 329 [orig. 1841]).

The very notion of the southern Levant as a historical land, not a mawkish apparition of the past, a land whose history is continuous with the biblical story yet not limited to it, was foreign to most people, particularly those in the West. Even today few visitors to the southern Levant venture beyond the familiar places associated with the Bible, returning to their homes unaware of any history in the southern Levant that is not connected to the scriptures. The relative lack of interest in the Classical, Mediaeval, and Post-Mediaeval past of the southern Levant illustrates this very clearly. To the West, the southern Levant is a landscape comprised of the biblical narratives mapped out in contemporary Palestine to the exclusion of all else. This dominant biblical perception of the landscape and the ancient sites that lie in it has greatly influenced the development of archaeology in the southern Levant. This is because most of the archaeological research in this area has been undertaken by scholars from a western background. Due to the immense influence this biblically-orientated mental image of the southern Levant has had on the development of archaeology in this region, it is important to explore how this image emerged in Western thought and what its implications were for archaeological practice.

2.2.2 Christian Pilgrimage and the Development of the Idea of the 'Holy Land'

The dominant importance of places associated with the Bible came about initially through their centuries-long association with Christian pilgrimage traditions and rituals (Silberman 1997: 64). Pilgrimage played a key role in the formation of a Christian idea of *holy land* (Wilkinson 1977; Taylor 1993). Especially during the fourth and fifth centuries AD, when the practice was in its infancy, the piety of the pilgrims shaped Christian thinking about Jerusalem and the territory surrounding it (Wilken 1992: 102). Particularly relevant to the present study are two features that marked pilgrimage in this period: the inclusion in the itinerary of pilgrims of holy places throughout the region, not simply those in Jerusalem, which created the idea of a sacred territory; and the intensification of devotion to place, and hence to tangible things, and with this the sacramental notion of holy places (ibid.: 103).

The Christian piety that came to centre on the southern Levant thus caused the emergence of the idea of a holy *land*. Although 'holy city' had begun to be used by Christians from the fourth century AD to designate the earthly Jerusalem, the term 'holy land' as a designation for the new Christian land did not become current until the sixth century AD. This notion occurs for the first time in fully developed form in a petition letter sent by Judaean monks to the emperor Anastasius at the beginning of the sixth century. The language of this petition was unprecedented in Christian history. Many of its central ideas had been germinating for generations, but here for the first time they were united in a theological concept that brought together history, practice, and belief. In this petition the earlier pilgrimage piety centred on holy places gave way to a nascent theology of a *Holy Land* embracing a territory (ibid.: 166-170).

Christian Europe was the heir of these beliefs and ideas that were forged during the Byzantine period. In particular during the rule of the southern Levant by Western knights in the twelfth century, the term *terra sancta* (holy land) gained international currency in the West (ibid.: xv). With the establishment of a Christian kingdom in Jerusalem people began to speak about the 'Holy Land' in a distinctive territorial sense, a land with fixed boundaries that could be defended by a Christian king against hostile invaders (ibid.). The main factor that shaped this early mediaeval image of the 'Holy Land' in western thought was the spirituality of pilgrimage. Pilgrimages at this time took the form of ritual processions to shrines and other holy sites, avoiding the modern cities of Palestine, as well as any other reminders of contemporary realities (Grabois 1988). The pilgrimage became the frame of the pilgrims' spiritual perspectives, rooted in the past and informed by the sacred history of the Old and New Testaments. The purpose of their pilgrimage was spiritual union with Divinity and its Revelation since the era of the Patriarchs to the time of Christ. The pilgrims identified

themselves with this past to such an extent that they actualised it, to become, at least for the period of their pilgrimage, their spiritual present. In so doing, the early mediaeval pilgrims were oblivious to the fundamental changes that had taken place in the southern Levant since biblical times. They really believed that the sites they visited and worshipped were biblically authentic (ibid.: 66-67).

The mediaeval pilgrims' spiritual perception of the 'Holy Land' was widely diffused in Western Europe. The accounts of their pilgrimages became a *genre literaire* with its own typology, and brought to Europe a spiritual vision of the 'Holy Land', devoid of any references to the realities of the age (ibid.: 74; Mumford-Jones 1956; Ben-Arieh 1990: 37). The physical reality of Palestine at the time of the visit was unimportant; its geography and other physical characteristics meaningless. The 'Holy City' and the 'Holy Land' were seen as ahistorical, unique in the timeless religious significance of their history (Ben-Arieh 1997: 27). In spite of the Byzantine and Crusader chronicles which provided information on contemporary life and events in the southern Levant, the image of the country as portrayed in the pilgrims' accounts prevailed and became the foundation on which ideas about the 'Holy Land' in western society were based (Grabois 1988). The transmission of this perception to western Europe, which was corroborated by the study of the Bible in mediaeval Europe, was facilitated by the foundation of chapels, churches and monasteries dedicated to south Levantine shrines, such as the spread of the 'Order of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre' in European countries (ibid.: 74). The past-orientated, metaphysical view of the southern Levant as the land of God was thus extremely influential. So much so in fact, that it remained prevalent until the nineteenth century (Ben-Arieh 1997: 27).

Indeed, this perception of the 'Holy Land' can be traced in English literature from the mediaeval period to the nineteenth century. In mediaeval literature, references to Palestine in pilgrims' reports were joined by the romances. English romances depicted a country completely unreal, a land of miracle, ruled entirely within a feudal order (Mumford-Jones 1956: 234). Palestine as a land of marvel was a tradition that clung to it deep into the nineteenth century. Indeed, as knowledge of the southern Levant grew through increased travel after the Middle Ages, the factual geography of Palestine made virtually no impression on the English imagination as late as the seventeenth century (ibid.: 242). English literature at this time saw Palestine through a veil of literary and religious images connected with the Bible as interpreted to fit the Christian scheme. If the Middle Ages pictured a fantastical Palestine, the English Renaissance therefore did little to correct this wondrous image by an appeal to fact. Moreover, this image changed little in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, despite the enormous increase in travel to the southern Levant and the ensuing descriptions of this area (ibid.: 243-250). Palestine remained a land set apart, a land of wonder, inevitably viewed as the country of the Bible as interpreted by Christians.

In addition to literature, art based on pilgrims' descriptions became an important channel of popularisation of the image of the 'Holy Land' in the West (Davis 1996). Drawings made by travellers to the southern Levant also played an important part in this development. Pictorial sketches often accompanied travel accounts and similarly, illustrated editions of the Bible began to appear (Ben-Arieh 1990: 40-41). Most of these pictorial representations were created through the same past-orientated, religious veil as the written accounts. In this way, both literature and art ensured that the idealised image of the 'Holy Land' became an integral part of the cultural heritage of Europe (Davis 1996: 74).

2.2.3 European Perceptions of the 'Holy Land' in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

The idealised image of the 'Holy Land' was substantiated by the changes in Christian attitudes toward the southern Levant caused by the Reformation. While Catholic pilgrimage continued, much of the Protestant world rejected the formalised pilgrimage traditions and, in preferring a spiritualised, metaphorical reading of the Bible, developed an abstracted and often dreamlike conception of biblical geography and history (Lowance 1980; Silberman 1991). During this time, Catholic attitudes remained the same however, and pilgrimages to the 'Holy Land' continued, visiting only the sites connected to the biblical past (Greenberg 1986: 360-361). Although in different ways, the perspective of the 'Holy Land' thus remained past-orientated in both Catholic and Protestant communities well into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Integral to eighteenth and nineteenth century European perspectives of the 'Holy Land' were also Jewish notions of the southern Levant. In contrast to Christianity, for Judaism corporate Jerusalem was holy, rather than the individual sites within (Werblowsky 1997). This Jerusalem had significance both as a down-to-earth reality in and for itself, and as the centre of Israel's covenantal and redemptive history as Judaism's *axis mundi*, and as the focal point of the covenant with its elements of Promised Land, exile, return, and restoration. Judaism's Jerusalem was therefore at once earthly and heavenly; a political entity in time, and a covenantal entity of eternity (ibid.). So in contrast to Christianity, where the earthly 'Holy Land' had no independent value, in Judaism concrete Jerusalem and Jerusalem of covenantal history reinforced one another.

Despite these differences, Jewish perspectives on the southern Levant were also past-orientated. A number of studies of Jewish photographers, artists, travellers, and the relationship between Anglo-Jewry and Palestine, point to an ongoing historical consciousness shared by the Jews of the diaspora and the Land which refers to, and is defined by, God's covenant with His People (Greenberg 1997:

252; Bar-Am *et al.* 1997; Sapir 1997). In photographs taken by Austro-Hungarian Jewish photographer Ephraim Mose Lilien for example, Palestine's harsh earthly realities were left out of the photographs. Furthermore, Lilien's work had a mythical quality - a portrait of an individual dressed up as a biblical prophet appealed to the overarching history of the covenant, to spiritual history (Bar-Am *et al.* 1997).

Although from different religious perspectives, the dream-like, past-orientated perception of the southern Levant in European thought was thus prevalent until the eighteenth century. Indeed, the metaphysical view of Jerusalem as the city of God was widespread until then (Ben-Arieh 1997: 27). However, world-wide developments during the eighteenth century, including political activity in the East, transformations wrought by the industrial revolution, and changes in transportation and demography (particularly in Western Europe), caused increasing attention to temporal reality, and a weakening of the religious dimension. A metaphorical view of the southern Levant therefore replaced the metaphysical one (ibid.). This view, although religious, differed from its predecessor primarily in that it was not based on theological doctrine. It did not however reach the level of realistic depiction. Descriptions became more religious-picturesque; the style of writing more secular, and greater attention was directed to the physical reality of Palestine. Details of the contemporary situation, however, were still not considered important. While this approach did not base itself on a doctrinal-religious model, it was misty, vague and romantic, lacking exactitude regarding the reality of the southern Levant of the time (ibid.). The conception of the southern Levant as essentially Judaeo-Christian thus remained, rather than being grounded in the real, specific present.

In the nineteenth century, the romantic-metaphorical view of the southern Levant continued. This was mainly a consequence of the general growth in Protestant literature relating to Jerusalem and the 'Holy Land'. Up to this period, the number of Protestant travellers who reached the southern Levant and left written records were few. European travel literature was dominated by the Catholic Church, represented in the southern Levant by the Franciscan order (Custodia Terra Sancta), whose members served as guides for western Catholic visitors (ibid.: 27-28). Until the nineteenth century the Ottoman government had forbidden the establishment of Protestant missions in its empire. It was only from about the 1830s that the Ottoman government granted Protestants permission to establish missions in Jerusalem and throughout the Levant. From this period onwards, the number of Protestant travellers and their writings grew (Handy 1981: xiii).

Due to the political and economic developments of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the establishment of formal Protestant missions in the Levant, travel to the 'Holy Land' was undertaken

by a range of different individuals such as scholars, writers, artists, missionaries, pilgrims, tourists, and consular staff. Nineteenth century literature concerning the 'Holy Land' thus contained more factual material, but the focus remained past-orientated and religious; the immersion into contemporary reality was 'misty' or submerged within geo-piety (see section 2.2.4 for a more detailed discussion of this term).

2.2.4 Perceptions of the 'Holy Land' in America

The broad concept of 'Holy Land' has also been a pervasive theme in American thought since the very beginnings of European settlement in North-America. This conception has appeared in many variations. These include the earliest formulations in Colonial times of the Puritan aspiration to a biblical commonwealth, where America itself was considered to be the embodiment of Zion; pilgrimages by Americans to the 'Holy Land'; and in the mid-twentieth century, restoration of 'Eretz Israel' under Jewish sovereignty in which the United States played a strategic role (Davis 1995: 11).

The Puritans were the source for the original transfer of 'Holy Land' ideas to America (Greenberg 1986: 353). The New World was the Canaan where Puritans had come to build the true biblical commonwealth. This theme of a fresh start in a special place recurred periodically as various religious groups sought refuge from European and, later, American religious intolerance (Vogel 1993: 32). Reform Judaism for example, took the view that Zion was to be found in America. Reiterating the Puritan theme, it spoke of an exodus from Europe to the promised land of America (ibid.: 354). This theme was however not limited to religious accommodation. The special relationship with the lands of the Bible that Americans constructed for themselves was premised on a single metaphor which explained the United States as a new Israel, a New World promised land reserved for members of a favoured nation. The land that had given birth to the Book and the land that was its fulfilment merged in an associational equation of biblical incident and national aspiration (Davis 1996: 3).

The American perception of the 'Holy Land' thus became immersed in the present through the Puritans' belief that they would bring about God's kingdom. This hope found expression through scriptural means. A deep attachment to the Hebrew language, the use of biblical names for persons and places, and the widespread role of the Bible in American family life all demonstrated a renewal-in-process of the ancient kingdom and a reenactment of its myth of the kingdom (Greenberg 1986: 354; Handy 1981: xii). In addition to scripture, early Americans also formed

perceptions about the 'Holy Land' in a contrived but popular fashion, through exhibits of dioramas, models, and panoramas (Vogel 1993: 35).

Following America's colonial era, Protestantism established undisputed sway over almost all aspects of national life by the mid-nineteenth century (Vogel 1993: 29). During this pre-eminence, Protestantism shaped the American perception of the 'Holy Land' to a greater degree than either Catholicism or Judaism. Despite its fracture into several key denominations, the Reformation heritage of Protestantism, as distilled through these major denominations, bequeathed several significant 'Holy Land'-orientated traditions to American culture, the most important of which for the present study was devotion to the concept of individual Bible study (ibid.). Indeed, the Bible represented the most widely read book in America from the Colonial era to the nineteenth century (Davis 1995: 12). Consequently, even long before American Protestants in any significant numbers visited the southern Levant they had formed an image of it because of their devotion to the Bible. Due to the popularity of Bible reading, familiarity with biblical events, personages, and locales was widespread among the American people (Vogel 1993: 29). Furthermore, on Sundays churchgoers heard sermons on biblical themes, many of which went into detail on the history and geography of the 'Holy Land' (Handy 1981: xi). In addition to the inheritance of perceptions of the 'Holy Land' from Europe therefore, the central role of the Bible in American culture was another source of American ideas concerning the southern Levant (Vogel 1993: 30).

Bible reading and inherited European perceptions of the 'Holy Land' were however not the only means by which Americans learned about biblical scenes and locales. Other forms of literature bolstered the American image of the 'Holy Land' as well. Classical works for example, such as those by Flavius Josephus, contributed significantly to the past-orientated American conception of the southern Levant (Vogel 1993: 32). Popular literature in the nineteenth century, including travel accounts, explorers' accounts, reports in newspapers and periodicals, and novels, as well as meetings of missionary societies and graphic images in photographic and print media, also played an important role in maintaining this view (Mumford-Jones 1956; Davis 1996; Ben-Arieh 1997; Silver-Brody 1997; Nir 1997; Gibson 1997).

The increase in popular literature and graphic images of the southern Levant in the nineteenth century was largely due to the changing political and economic circumstances of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries mentioned above. Due to these changes, the number of American visitors to the southern Levant in the nineteenth century increased dramatically in contrast to the colonial period when actual contact with the 'Holy Land' was limited to very few Americans (Vogel 1993: 33). The

primary motive for American Protestant visitors to Palestine was to see the places where the events of the Bible took place. As one traveller put it:

> 'a perfect knowledge of the Holy Land is needful to a perfect knowledge of the Holy Scriptures' (Morris 1977: 14 [orig. 1872]).

American visitors to the southern Levant also came for other reasons, including their roles as missionaries, colonists, archaeologists, biblical scholars, and consular personnel (ibid.: 36). Because of the importance of these visitors as clergy, scholars, and political or cultural leaders, and because they could be overwhelmingly identified as adherents of Protestantism, they formed the 'policy-forming elite' of American Protestantism, at least as far as the American conception of the 'Holy Land' was concerned (Vogel 1993: 246; Jaher 1973; Lerner 1989). Indeed, since Protestantism had emerged as the dominant religious force in American life during the nineteenth century, it was strong enough to pave the way toward the formation of a collective 'Holy Land' image in the American mind that was past-orientated (Vogel 1993: 38; Handy 1981: xi-xii). The role of the biblical past and its influence on the American perception of the southern Levant was thus unyielding.

The perceptual process whereby the collective view of the 'Holy Land' was formed in the nineteenth century western mind, and through which it exerted its influence on western thought and action, has been termed 'image/reality' (Vogel 1993: 7). In western culture, the collective view of the 'Holy Land' was one of the present seen through the veil of the past. The collective view was 'myth', not as fantasy but as digested reality. Vogel has used the term 'geo-piety' to explain this interplay between imagery, reality, geography, and sacred space (ibid.: 7; Ben-Arieh 1997: 42). In terms of western Christian attachment to the 'Holy Land', the combination of land and sacred association was thus enhanced by a selectivity in perceiving facts, especially when those facts conflicted with strongly held values. Thus the image of the 'Holy Land' - as part of a meaningful past - was retained tenaciously, while at the same time the image of the 'Holy Land' as a place came into clearer focus.

A clear expression of this conceptual intimacy is the oft-quoted passage from Edward Robinson's *Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai and Arabia Petraea* (1841):

> 'As in the case of most of my countrymen, especially in New England, the scenes of the Bible had made a deep impression upon my mind from the earliest childhood; and afterwards in riper years this feeling had grown into a strong desire to visit in person the places so remarkable in the history of the human race. Indeed in no country of the world, perhaps, is such a feeling more widely diffused than in New England; in no country are the Scriptures better known, or more highly

> prized. From his earliest years the child is there accustomed not only to read the Bible for himself; but he also reads or listens to it in the morning and evening devotions of the family, in the daily village-school, in the Sunday-school and Bible-class, and in the weekly ministrations of the sanctuary. Hence, as he grows up, the names of Sinai, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, the Promised Land, become associated with his earliest recollections and holiest feelings (Robinson 1841 1: 46).

A quote from the Methodist Episcopal bishop Henry White Warren provides another example of the expression of geo-piety:

> 'This is the first country where I have felt at home. Yet I have been in no country that is so unlike my own. Somehow this seems as if I had lived here long ago in my half-forgotten youth, or possibly in some ante-natal condition, dimly remembered. As I try to clear away the mists, bring forward the distant, and make present what seems prehistoric, I find myself at my mother's side and my early childhood renewed. Now I see why this strange country seems so natural. Its customs, sights, sounds, and localities were those I lived among in that early time, as shown to me by pictures, explained by word, and funded as a part of my undying property' (Warren 1874: 246).

Although the amount of actual contact Americans had with the southern Levant had increased immensely in the nineteenth century, and concomitantly the knowledge of the physical reality of Palestine had become greater, the accounts written by American visitors at this time were still misty, vague, and romantic, rather than grounded in the real, specific present. Like nineteenth century Europe, America's vision of the southern Levant was through a past-orientated, religious veil that produced an image of the southern Levant as a holy, ethereal, and timeless land. By the nineteenth century, an idealised image of the 'Holy Land' submerged in geo-piety thus determined the West's perception of the southern Levant. This image had an immense effect on the development of archaeology in the southern Levant, and found its first concrete expression in the work of Edward Robinson (see section 2.3.3 below). The effect of the West's image of the 'Holy Land' went hand in hand however with the influence that nineteenth century developments in biblical studies had on early archaeological practice in the southern Levant.

2.3 Developments in Nineteenth Century Biblical Scholarship

2.3.1 Biblical Studies and Historicism

The idealised, past-orientated image of the southern Levant formed over centuries of geo-piety in Europe and America, was reinforced by developments in nineteenth century biblical studies. Instead of the earlier mode of biblical investigation, which was limited to literal, moral and allegorical interpretation, the nineteenth century saw the advent of a purely historical treatment of Israel's religion. This represented a different mode of organisation of the material; a mode - the historical - which was widely characteristic of all forms of humanistic research at the time (Hayes and Prussner 1985: 126-127). Indeed, Schlegel and Novalis had first used the term 'historicism' around 1800 to

demand that scholars no longer looked at the human world as a realm of static relations, but as a changing and developing world, in other words, that they looked upon it as history (Scholtz 1995: 153). This historicism so clearly expressed at the end of the eighteenth century can be interpreted as a result of the development of modern science and the Enlightenment (Reventlow 1995: 132). Firstly, this was because these two phenomena had created a new situation which brought into consciousness that humanity was living in a world which was separated from Greek and Roman antiquity by an epochal break (Scholtz 1995: 153-154). Secondly, the Enlightenment had opened a scientific view over the wide field of the human through the destruction of established concepts of Christian salvation and universal history (ibid.). At the time when the science of language became the history of language, when aesthetics integrated into the history of art, and when in law a historical school began to emerge, historicism simultaneously manifested itself in theology (ibid.).

From the late eighteenth century onwards the historical mode thus formed the basis of the hermeneutics of mainstream biblical criticism (Oden 1980: 148). In the nineteenth century therefore, the question of what biblical texts meant was answered in thoroughly historical terms, and not in the first instance because the texts themselves demanded historical treatment. Instead, the question of meaning was answered in this way because such historical orientation was the accepted and approved method of understanding when dealing with human phenomena. Because of this, the biblical narratives came to be seen as having an historical character which required them to be studied within an historical interpretative framework (ibid.: 135).

Since the Old Testament had been taken out of the realm of revelation by developments in the humanities, the Bible came to be perceived as a source of ancient history not only in biblical scholarship, but in a popular sense as well. Indeed, like the sagas of Alexander the Great and other classical literature, Europeans and Americans were familiar with the biblical narratives. Palestine therefore came to be perceived in the western world not only as the divine land of the Bible, but also as part of the ancient world, whether Classical-Mediterranean or ancient Middle Eastern. Interest in these areas increased steadily, and the number of Western visitors to the Mediterranean region and the Middle East rose accordingly - at first to the Classical world, and afterwards to the centres of even earlier civilisations (Ben-Arieh 1990: 43). In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it became fashionable in Europe for young members of wealthy families to participate in Grand Tours (ibid.). These journeys were often associated with the practice of amassing antiquities and transferring them to the travellers' country of origin. These collections inspired scientific interest in the ancient world, and the ancient history of the Mediterranean region, including the Classical and Middle Eastern countries, which became focal points for scholars throughout the West (ibid.: 44). The popular perception of Palestine as part of the ancient world thus led to some of the

first antiquarian practices in the southern Levant. In turn, the antiquarians' collections inspired some of the first material culture studies to be undertaken on objects from this area (e.g. Lady Hester Stanhope's search for antiquities in 1810 [Silberman 1982: 24-27]).

The scholarly interest motivated by the antiquarian activity in the southern Levant was particularly great because of its link to the Bible. From its inception, the study of material culture from the southern Levant was thus tightly bound to the idea that the biblical narratives, just like Classical literature, represented ancient history. This formed an influential theme in the early study of the southern Levant with important implications for archaeological fieldwork and interpretation (see sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 below). Moreover, it formed the motivation for the first archaeological work to be undertaken in Palestine. Indeed, the scholars responsible for this early work, such as Petrie, Macalister, and Mackenzie, were not biblical scholars, or even particularly pious like many of the American travellers to Palestine. They were scholars interested in the ancient world who had come to investigate the southern Levant in the same way as many of their contemporaries in Greece and Italy, to look for the remains of the ancient civilisations described in ancient history.

2.3.2 Biblical Criticism

The historical treatment of the Old Testament also led to the development of an immensely influential school of thought in biblical scholarship led by Julius Wellhausen: biblical criticism. It was the great influence of this academic movement that indirectly led to the next phase in the development of archaeological practice in the southern Levant, biblical topography. In addition to the influence of historicism on biblical scholarship, other innovations in the general intellectual life of the nineteenth century also contributed to the changes in theological orientation that took place at this time. Particularly under the impact of the social sciences for example, religion was treated increasingly as an expression and reflection of human culture and experience. Indeed, in the early nineteenth century De Wette was concerned for the first time with religion in general as part of the universal experience of mankind, and in doing so changed the orientation of Old Testament studies for the next two centuries (Rogerson 1984: 272). Religion and religious practices, rather than ideas or teachings, thus became the primary focus of attention, especially in Germany. This was reflected in the fact that 'religion' tended to replace 'theology' in the titles of published volumes (Hayes and Prussner 1985: 136). The focus on religion meant that the Bible was no longer treated as the inspired word of God, nor as the literary deposit of theological reflections. Neither was the religious history reported in the Bible understood as a history of theology or doctrines, nor of doctrinal or theological development. Instead, the Old Testament was treated primarily as a collection of religious documents that had been produced by a living religion. Religion, unlike doctrines and

theology, did not lend itself readily to systematisation and thus defied being presented in the form of logical and co-ordinated ideas and systems. Instead, unity was found in the on-going process of history (ibid.).

After this long formative period of development in thought, the school of the 'history of Israel's religion' supplanted Old Testament theology at the end of the nineteenth century. The primary objective of works of this genre was to trace the history of Israel's religion from the earliest discoverable stages down to the Christian era. They were thus preoccupied with genetics and teleological development (Hayes and Prussner 1985: 133). Another main purpose to which the vast majority of these 'histories' were dedicated had its basis, ultimately, in the roles they were assigned to play as 'prior theologies' to provide a religious and historical context within which the Old Testament could be read and understood (ibid.).

The biblical scholars in this school also considered their work as a scientific endeavour (Scholtz 1995: 159). Their work thus involved two essential steps, the gathering of material through induction and the integration of these findings in orderly pattern (Hayes and Prussner 1985: 134). Applied to the study of the history of Israel's religion, the principle of an inductive collection of reliable data inevitably raised the twin questions of where and how such data could be found. Because it was interested in the religion of the Hebrew people and not merely in the religious views of the Old Testament, the historical school answered the first problem by going farther afield than the earlier works. The literature of the Old Testament constituted the main source, but other sources of information, such as archaeology and comparative religious studies for example, were tapped as well (ibid.). In addition to the link made between the material culture of the southern Levant and the 'ancient history' of the biblical narratives by the antiquarian interest in this region, this development laid the foundation for the use of archaeology in conjunction with Old Testament texts in biblical scholarship.

Biblical scholars in the nineteenth century were in agreement over the second question, how reliable data could be discovered, and looked to historical criticism as a means of determining the actual sense of the material provided by the biblical narrative. Where previous theological approaches had sought for organic unity in a logical structure of thought, the historical school found it in the on-going process of history. But to establish what the exact course of that process had been, historical criticism was necessary. With the collection of accurate data, the next step was to relate them to one another in some coherent form. The instrument of organisation was the process of history itself (ibid.: 135).

Within this nineteenth century tradition of historical criticism the work of Karl Henning Graf Reventlow (1815-1869), Abraham Kuenen (1828-1891), and Julius Wellhausen (1844-1918) was undertaken. Nothing had more effect on Old Testament scholarship than the groundbreaking historical critical work of these scholars (Hayes and Prussner 1985: 127). Mosaism or the law, once considered, like in the biblical traditions themselves, to be the starting point of the divine revelation, came to be seen in their work as a late development which had been ultimately dependent upon the prophets for its theological views. As a result, the most definite literary entity to which the idea of a divinely communicated doctrine could be attached had now lost its connection with Moses and the exodus (Thompson 1992: 2). It was above all Wellhausen, whose *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (1878) summed up the literary and historical arguments for the late date of the Mosaic legislation, who forced totally new interpretations of the religious and political history of Israel (Knight 1983; Whybray 1987). Wellhausen's ideas were immensely influential and had a profound and enduring impact on biblical studies.

However, archaeology in the Near East was initially involved neither in the genesis nor in the sustenance of Wellhausen's hypothesis, but in attempts to counteract it. His powerful challenge to orthodoxy and tradition gave added impetus to the quest for inscriptions and other material culture, which might be cited in favour of the historicity of the Patriarchal narratives and the authorship of Moses.

2.3.3 Edward Robinson and Biblical Topography

One of the most famous scholars to travel to Palestine to refute Wellhausen's hypotheses was Edward Robinson. Robinson was a Protestant minister as well as a professor of biblical literature and is generally considered the founder of the study of biblical topography (Williams 1999; Silberman 1982; Moorey 1991). Indeed, Robinson produced one of the first comprehensive biblical topographical studies of the 'Holy Land' in his *Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai and Arabia Petraea* (1841).

Robinson's motivation for undertaking his topographical study was the desire to defend the Bible against the increasing influence of biblical criticism. As a student, and later as professor of biblical literature at Andover Theological Seminary, a bastion of religious conservatism, Robinson found himself at the front lines of an intense religious controversy within New England (Silberman 1982: 38-39; Williams 1999). Liberalism - influenced by the German school of biblical criticism - had begun to undermine the theological foundations of the Puritan Fathers, and to the conservatives such views were a threat. When a liberal professor was appointed to the chair of divinity at Harvard

College in 1803, the conservatives removed themselves, their support, and their sons from Harvard and founded a rival seminary at Andover. The new conservative school would provide a conservative defence against the 'heretical' liberal attack (ibid.). After years of waging theological war as professor of biblical literature at Andover, in 1832 - before taking up his appointment as professor of biblical literature at the Union Theological Seminary in New York - Robinson left for Palestine to battle for the authenticity of the Bible (ibid.). The theological context of the nineteenth century thus played an important role in the motivation for what is generally regarded as the first archaeological study of this region: Robinson's biblical topography of Palestine.

Indeed, historical topography was a central interest of nineteenth century scholarship that led directly to the emergence of subjects such as biblical archaeology, Mesopotamian archaeology, and classical archaeology (Andrén 1998: 120). The great surveys of historical topography were often created in the initial phases of the history of these different disciplines. This was because it was regarded as a form of historical background knowledge that formed the external contours of the political course of events described in historical sources (ibid.: 121). Indeed, when the modern discipline of history was established in the first half of the nineteenth century, the antiquarian tradition - where studies of artefacts remained closely associated with historiography (Trigger 1989: 70) - was replaced, and a more exclusively text-based scholarship was created. History was thus created in opposition to, and with the mutual exclusion of, the object-centred archaeology established at the same time (Andrén 1998: 120). History in the nineteenth century focused mainly on political history and centred on great events, ideas, and personalities (Burke 1991: 2). Because of this perspective, the 'historical' role of archaeology in the nineteenth century was primarily confined to studies of the historical topography that was the scene of the political drama, and of 'early' history, which to varying degrees lacked the 'necessary' texts (ibid.). The greatest need for surveys was therefore found in the areas that lacked direct continuity with the assumed existence of older vanished settlement (Andrén 1998: 121). This applied to countries such as Palestine, where men like Edward Robinson managed to compile historical topographical surveys thanks to great familiarity with terrain and text. Robinson's work can thus be clearly located within the theoretical framework of the newly emerged disciplines of history and archaeology.

In compiling his biblical topography, Robinson correlated biblical places with contemporary Arabic place names. He was able to do so for two reasons. Firstly, he believed the Bible to be historically accurate. For Robinson, the existence of the sites mentioned in the Bible and the events that occurred there were unquestionably true. Secondly, he viewed the landscape of the southern Levant through the past-orientated, religious veil of most Western visitors. Indeed, raised in an atmosphere

where the Bible was read devoutly and regularly, Robinson wrote as he approached Jerusalem in 1838 that

> 'From the earliest childhood I had read of and studied the localities of this sacred spot; now I beheld them with my own eyes; and they all seemed familiar to me, as if the realisation of a former dream. I seemed to be again among cherished scenes of childhood, long unvisited, indeed, but distinctly recollected; and it was almost a painful interruption, when my companion (who had been here before) began to point out and name the various objects in view' (Robinson 1841: 326).

For Robinson, the biblical past and the actual, present reality thus merged into one single vision of the south Levantine landscape. As he compiled his topographical survey this single vision determined his interpretation of the landscape. In Robinson's work the immense influence that the 'Holy Land' imagery of the Western world had on perceptions of the south Levantine landscape thus came to the fore. All other historical links the landscape might have had with other periods, the fact that it was an area whose history was continuous with the biblical narratives but not limited to it, was not considered. Robinson's topography thus represented a landscape comprised of the biblical narratives mapped out in contemporary Palestine to the exclusion of all else. Here for the first time, we see the biblical map of the 'Holy Land' that existed in the western mind mapped out in concrete geographical terms.

Furthermore, by providing an historical background for the political course of events described in the biblical sources through linking the events in the Bible to specific locations in the southern Levant, Robinson determined the role that these places played in history. In other words, through the link between contemporary Arabic place-names and biblical places, the 'history' which the biblical narratives provided for those places became 'what happened' at those sites. His biblical identifications thus provided the framework in which later excavations at some of these sites were interpreted. Indeed, through his identification, the events that were described in the Bible in connection with biblical places were assumed to have occurred at the sites that were excavated, therefore determining the interpretation of the excavated material culture. Since early archaeologists in the southern Levant, such as Petrie, Bliss, Macalister, and Mackenzie for example (see sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.2), regarded archaeology as the physical manifestation of history, the layers in a tell (archaeological sites in the Middle East comprised of layers of settlement debris which build up to create a mound) were regarded as 'slices of time' which could be related to cities known from historical sources. As they understood it, a tell consisted of a series of horizontal layers, each of which corresponded to a time or event known from history. In this way, both the chronology and typology of the excavated material was determined by its correlation with specific historical events.

In addition, Robinson's biblical identification of ancient sites in the southern Levant provided the impetus for archaeological fieldwork to begin at particular sites because of their biblical connections. Most of the well-known early excavations in the southern Levant, such those at Tell el-Hesi (identified with Lachish), Tell el-Mutesellim (identified with Megiddo), Tell ed-Duweir (identified with Lachish), Tell el-Ful (identified with Gibeah), and Tell es-Sultan (identified with Jericho), were undertaken at sites that had been identified with famous biblical places. The very fact that most of these sites were (and still are) known by their (assumed) biblical rather than Arabic names attests to the immense strength of the West's mental map of the southern Levant.

As archaeological activity increased throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the cumulative effect of the Western vision of the landscape of the 'Holy Land' on the perception of the modern landscape was enormous. Indeed, the territorial shape of the 'Holy Land' in the collective mind of the West ultimately became the legal boundaries of the post-WWI Palestine Mandate. This was determined not by census or political debate, but primarily by the work of the archaeological surveyors of the British-sponsored Survey of Western Palestine (Biger 1994: 40-41; Ra'anan 1976). The incredible influence of the West's biblically infused perception of the southern Levant therefore not only influenced archaeology, but through it, shaped an entire region geographically and politically. Furthermore, with the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 many Arabic place names were replaced by Hebrew names, many of which were biblically inspired.

The ultimate 'triumph' of the West's biblical map of the 'Holy Land' over the modern landscape of Palestine came however with the administration of the country by the British Mandatory authorities (Silberman 1997: 67). With the establishment of a modern, bureaucratic Department of Antiquities and the enactment of laws protecting a recognised list of ancient sites, the various tells, ruins, tombs, and ancient village sites of the country acquired a special legal status that superseded any local meaning they might have possessed. In many cases therefore, ancient sites came to be accorded an historical weight far greater in political terms than modern villages. The frequent instances of disputes between the Jewish, Christian and Muslim inhabitants of the country on the one hand, and arriving archaeological expeditions on the other, over property rights to ancient sites, underlined the new relations of power (ibid.).

In recent archaeology, the immense influence of the past-orientated, biblical vision of the southern Levant is also demonstrated by the fact that the biblical identification of sites still forms the basis of archaeological interpretation at many excavations. The site of Ein el-Qudeirat for example, has been interpreted according to its identification with Kadesh Barnea (Cohen 1981), Bir Ar'air according to its interpretation with Aroer (Biran 1983), and En Haseva according to its identification with Tamar

(Cohen and Yisrael 1995). Furthermore, while the excavations at Tel ed-Duweir and Tel el-Mutesellim were resumed in the 1970s and 1990s respectively, their interpretation continued to be determined by their identification with Lachish and Megiddo (Ussishkin 1983; Finkelstein *et al.* 2000a). H. Franken has been one of the few scholars to critically assess 'identification' in south Levantine archaeology as an interpretative method (Franken 1976). As he has pointed out, the use of identification as an interpretative model is to confuse an historical map with a modern geographical map (Franken 1976: 3-11). Moreover, the historical map that is used in the case of south Levantine archaeology is a mental map based on a landscape of the psyche which developed alongside the evolution of the *idea* of the 'Holy Land' in Western thought.

The mental image of the 'Holy Land' in the West has thus in many ways 'become' the modern landscape of the southern Levant. This is especially the case for south Levantine Iron Age archaeologists. Through this link, the biblical narratives have formed the dominant interpretative framework for the archaeology of this region. The influence of this interpretative strategy is particularly evident in the first excavations to be undertaken in the southern Levant.

2.4 The Advent of Systematic Excavation in the Southern Levant: 1890-1908

2.4.1 William Mathew Flinders Petrie and his Excavations at Tell el-Hesi (1890)

The first systematic archaeological excavation in the southern Levant was undertaken by Petrie at Tell el-Hesi in 1890 (see Figure 1). Other scholars had undertaken excavation in this area before Petrie (e.g. Charles Warren in Jerusalem), but he was the first to do so in a systematic fashion. Indeed, Petrie was the first to introduce stratigraphic principles and ceramic seriation to Palestine. Before Petrie's excavations at Tell el-Hesi, archaeological methods were beginning to be developed in the Near East by H. Schliemann at Hissarlik in 1871. At these excavations the make-up of a tell was understood for the first time (Doehl 1986: 104-107). In addition, in Britain the typological arrangement and dating of stratigraphically superimposed artefacts had been carried out by Pitt-Rivers at Cranborne Chase in 1878 (Thompson 1977). Before leaving for Egypt (where Petrie worked before excavating in Palestine) in 1880, Petrie attended museum exhibits and meetings of the Royal Archaeological Institute at which these principles of stratigraphy and typology were presented in detail (Drower 1985: 24-25). In addition, Schliemann visited Petrie at Hawara in 1888 where they discussed each other's work (Drower 1990: 92). When Petrie came to Palestine in 1890 to excavate Tell el-Hesi, he thus combined the knowledge he had amassed in Britain and from

Schliemann into the first application of stratigraphical and typological ideas to the excavation of a south Levantine tell.

Petrie was not a biblical scholar, or indeed a trained archaeologist, all his knowledge was self-taught (Callaway 1980; Fargo 1984). However, like all other scholars at the time, he had been raised in an overtly Christian society and was familiar with the biblical narratives. Since the biblical narratives had come to be regarded as historical sources through the developments of nineteenth century biblical scholarship, and since archaeology at that time was seen as an aid to history, archaeology in the southern Levant was regarded as the physical reflection of the historical events described in the biblical narratives. Archaeology was thus seen as an extension of history by complementing the information from the written sources.

As a result of this view of archaeology, like in Europe, direct links were made between material culture and political and religious history, with a focus on ethnic groups. Material culture differentiation was thus directly related to ethnic groups. However, since archaeological sites in the southern Levant, or tells, were different in their make-up from sites in Europe, methods of archaeological excavation and interpretation developed along a slightly different trajectory from those in Europe. Indeed, due to the equation made between events and places mentioned in historical sources and archaeological remains, Petrie believed that the layers that made up a tell represented 'slices of time' which could be related to cities mentioned in historical sources. This idea had been first expressed in the Near East by Schliemann at Hissarlik, who had interpreted the succession of layers that made up a tell as the accumulation of successive cities (Callaway 1980: 52). Petrie thus understood the make-up of a tell as a series of horizontal layers consisting of occupation debris that had accumulated at a fairly constant rate, so that if two fixed dating points were known within the sequence of accumulation, the approximate dates of the intervening layers could be interpolated by reference to the calculated rate of accumulation (ibid.).

The belief that archaeology represented the physical manifestation of history also greatly influenced the development of ceramic studies in the southern Levant. Indeed, at Tell el-Hesi Petrie realised that change in pottery forms corresponded to the succession of layers that made up the tell. Since each layer was attributed to a particular historical event, he was thus able to use material culture change to denote chronological change. On this basis, Petrie organised the excavated material culture from Tell el-Hesi to provide a chronological framework for the site. Petrie thus established the idea that change in material culture reflected chronological change. Not only was Petrie's correlation between changes in ceramic form and chronology immensely important for the newly emerging subject of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, it became a fundamental touchstone in

archaeology generally (Rice 1987: 215). In addition, this idea had important consequences for the way in which ceramics were analysed. Through his link between ceramics and chronology, one of the main aims of Petrie's approach to ceramic analysis was to create a master sequence of ceramic types defined by shape and decoration with which to cross-date sites based on similar ceramic types. He achieved this by developing a master ceramic sequence for Egypt and Palestine. The weakness of Petrie's method is however that variability has to be minimised in order to identify distinct and successive chronological horizons. At the time however, his approach to ceramic analysis was immensely influential. So much so in fact, that the direct link between ceramic and chronological change, and concomitantly the emphasis on minimising variability, has remained a fundamental part of archaeological practice in the southern Levant until the present (see Chapters 5,6, and 9).

In addition to these ideas, Petrie's eugenical ideology played an important role in the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. His eugenical ideas meant that archaeological method in the southern Levant quickly became interwoven within a racial framework (Silberman 1993b: 547). Petrie was deeply influenced by his friend Sir Francis Galton's theory of eugenics (Drower 1985: 302-3; Silberman 1991). Eugenics identified the motive force of history as the hereditary inequality of races, with 'superior' human types naturally dominating 'inferior' ones (Lorimer 1988). In addition, the theory of eugenics maintained that historical change came about through 'racial degeneration' of conquering races through uncontrolled interbreeding with their subjects (Galton 1869: 351-62; Silberman 1991). In Egypt, Petrie found sequences of distinct archaeological cultures that he unhesitatingly ascribed to successive invasions and conquests of the country from the outside by biologically homogenous groups (Petrie 1906). He saw the degeneration of each of these 'racially pure' conquering groups through interbreeding clearly reflected in the successive stages of 'rise', 'floruit' and 'decline' which he distinguished in every pottery type that he had related to these ethnic groups (Petrie 1891: 47-48). Furthermore, Petrie believed that pharaonic Egypt was founded by a superior 'Dynastic Race'. Petrie's approach to material culture interpretation was thus deeply influenced by eugenical theory. His approach was not only very influential on the early development of archaeology in the southern Levant, but also on later scholarship. Petrie's ideas regarding the 'lifespan' of ceramics in particular, were to remain very influential in later ceramic studies undertaken by Albright and Wright (see section 2.6.3).

At Tell el-Hesi, Petrie's eugenical ideology led him to separate the mound's archaeological deposits into distinct strata based on the predominance of different pottery types in each stratum. His association of each of these pottery types and strata with particular ethnic groups suggested to Petrie several successive episodes of racial domination (Petrie 1891: 14-15). In this respect, the

identification of a destruction level in association with what was then termed 'Mycenaean-Phoenician' pottery was very important. This pottery was dated by Aegean archaeologists to between 1500 and 1100 BC. It had also been associated with Egyptian tomb contexts of the New Kingdom (Wightman 1985: 6). Since it was believed at that time that the Hebrew exodus and conquest had taken place after the reigns of Ramesses II and Merneptah, in other words during the late thirteenth or early twelfth centuries BC, Petrie concluded that the appearance of 'Mycenaean-Phoenician' pottery in a Palestinian tell represented the time just before, and including, the Israelite conquest of Canaan (Petrie 1891; Wightman 1985: 6). The presence of a destruction level at the 'Mycenaen-Phoenician' pottery horizon was thus seen as support for this conclusion. He therefore attributed this destruction to the Israelite conquest and dated it to around 1200 BC. It followed for Petrie that the building remains below the destruction level represented 'Canaanite/Amorite' occupation, while those above the destruction level represented the Israelite Monarchical period up to the assumed abandonment of the site after the historically inferred Babylonian exile in the early sixth century (Petrie 1891).

Although Petrie's interpretation of archaeological material was primarily evolutionary and thus historically cyclical, his view of archaeological remains as a reflection of the movement of various historically recorded ethnic groups echoed the wider theoretical framework of archaeology at the time (Trigger 1989: 148-206; Sklenář 1983: 130-164). Indeed, the purpose of archaeology was - by using artefacts - to write history as the term was understood then, as political and religious history, with the focus on ethnic groups (Andrén 1998: 122). Since the Bible was understood as an historical source for the southern Levant, this meant that the new archaeological methods that Petrie introduced became immediately interwoven within an historical (biblical) framework. Archaeological practice in the southern Levant was thus from its inception based on a conflation of archaeological and historical information, along with a particular view of ethnicity.

Although many of Petrie's specific chronological divisions and ethnic attributions have long since been revised (Gitin 1985), his reliance on ethnic categorisation had a lasting effect on archaeological practice in the southern Levant. Indeed, from the beginning of the twentieth century until well after World War II, the main emphasis of south Levantine archaeology was on identifying discrete historical strata by means of stratigraphical and ceramic analysis that could be related to specific ethnic groups. As a result of Petrie's ideas therefore, the history of the region was seen as a sequence of violent, historically recorded (or archaeologically inferred) racial or ethnic conquests, based on the equation of new pottery styles and destruction levels with the arrival of foreign ethnic groups (Dessel and Joffe 2000: 32). Many of Petrie's methods and ideas were initially perpetuated in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, by the American scholar F.J. Bliss, who continued the

excavations at Tell el-Hesi for the Palestine Exploration Fund after Petrie's return to Egypt (Drower 1985). His excavations at four tells in southern Israel with R.A.S. Macalister were especially influential in this respect.

2.4.2 Laying the Foundations of South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology: Culture-History and the Work of Bliss, Macalister, Welch, and Thiersch

In 1900, F.B. Welch published an extremely important article for the development of Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant entitled *The Influence of the Aegean Civilisation on South Palestine*. In this article, Welch distinguished between imported and locally-made painted pottery of 'Aegean style' which corresponded to Petrie's 'Mycenaean-Phoenician' pottery (see Figs. 3 and 4). He associated the local painted pottery with 'Greco-Phoenician' ware, characteristic of the Cypriote Iron Age, which he dated to c. 900-700 BC (Welch 1900: 347-49). Welch reached these conclusions by examining the pottery from four tells located in the foothills of southern Palestine excavated by Bliss and Macalister between 1898 and 1900 (Moorey 1991: 30-31). In turn, Bliss and Macalister's report on their excavations used the work of Welch and Petrie to formulate the first pottery chronology for ancient Palestine. The pottery was published in four groups: 'Early Pre-Israelite', 'Late Pre-Israelite', 'Jewish', and 'Seleucid'. They interpreted the disappearance of Aegean shapes and decoration as the beginning of the 'Jewish' period, c. 800 BC, and the appearance of Greek imported pottery as the beginning of the Seleucidan period - and thus the end of the 'Jewish' period - c. 400 BC (Bliss and Macalister 1902). The dates for these four periods were borrowed from Aegean/Egyptian comparative chronology (Wightman 1985: 9).

Bliss and Macalister's excavations at these four tells also uncovered stamped seal impressions bearing the inscription 'lamelekh' and winged scarabs (see Figure 5). These impressions appeared commonly on storage jars which they dated to the later 'Jewish' period (Bliss and Macalister 1902). Such stamped seal impressions had already been found by Warren in Jerusalem, but their abundance at the four tells in southern Israel led them to be regarded as diagnostic of the 'Jewish' period (Wightman 1985: 9). These seal impressions were thus the first items of material culture other than pottery to become linked to chronology in south Levantine archaeology.

Bliss and Macalister's excavation results were further discussed in an article by the German scholar H. Thiersch in 1908. In his article *Die neuren Ausgrabungen in Palästina*, Thiersch proposed to associate the locally-made painted pottery of the 'Late Pre-Israelite' period with the arrival of the Philistines in the southern coastal plain of Palestine during the reign of Ramesses III (Thiersch 1908: 378). Thiersch brought together four strands of evidence to arrive at this conclusion. Firstly,

to him the pottery was of 'Aegean, post-Mycenean inspiration'. Secondly, he believed the Philistines were most probably of Mediterranean origin. Thirdly, the Egyptian historical records referred to Ramesses III settling the Philistines in the south of Palestine after defeating them in battle. And fourthly, the painted pottery appeared to be concentrated within the southern coastal plain of Palestine. Thiersch's hypothesis provided a date within the early twelfth century BC (based on the Egyptian chronology for the twentieth Dynasty) for the first appearance of this type of pottery in Palestine (Wightman 1985: 10). Thiersch's ideas were immensely influential in the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. Indeed, because Thiersch's hypothesis served to provide a date within the early twelfth century BC for the first appearance of this type of pottery in Palestine, it defined the beginning of the Iron Age for all subsequent archaeological work in the southern Levant. Even today one of the two main anchors for south Levantine Iron Age chronology remains based on Thiersch's equation of the locally-made painted pottery with the arrival of the Philistines and a twelfth century BC date (Finkelstein 1996).

The writings of Bliss, Macalister, Welch, and Thiersch clearly demonstrate a transition from the cultural evolutionism of Petrie's work, to a culture-historical mode of thought. Cultural evolutionism was simultaneously challenged across Europe at the end of the nineteenth century by growing primordial nationalism and declining faith in the benefits of technological progress (Trigger 1989: 148). Disillusionment with progress, together with the belief that human behaviour was biologically determined, promoted growing scepticism about human creativity. This led to declining faith in independent development, a belief that particular inventions were unlikely to be made more than once in human history, and hence a growing reliance on diffusion and migration to explain cultural change. It also encouraged an increasing interest in the idiosyncratic features associated with particular ethnic groups rather than with the general characteristics of successive stages of cultural development. As a result, almost all cultural change in the archaeological record was attributed to the diffusion of ideas from one group to another or to migrations that had led to the replacement of one people and their culture by another (ibid.: 150-151). As increasing amounts of material evidence were collected because of the focus on the excavation of large sites, the attention of archaeologists turned to the study of artefacts. Their main objective was to determine to which ethnic groups various finds belonged, so that a picture of the history of a site could be built up (Sklenář 1983: 91).

This is clearly illustrated by Bliss and Macalister's and Welch's work, where material culture differentiation is equated with ethnic groups. Their association between 'Aegean' style ceramic shapes and decoration with the 'Israelite' period, Greek pottery with the 'Seleucid' period, and seal impressions with the 'Jewish' period provided the beginning of the attribution of idiosyncratic

features to particular ethnic groups in south Levantine archaeology. In addition, Thiersch's proposal to associate the locally-made painted pottery of the 'Late Pre-Israelite' period with the arrival of the Philistines in the southern coastal plain of Palestine during the reign of Ramesses III (Thiersch 1908: 378), is clearly underpinned by a diffusionist mode of thought. Following the work of these scholars, culture-history rapidly became the dominant interpretative framework in the archaeology of this area.

2.4.3 Summary

By the early years of the twentieth century, south Levantine Iron Age archaeology had begun to develop its own distinctive methods of archaeological practice through the influence of general trends in historical, biblical, and archaeological thought. Indeed, a tell had come to be regarded as a series of superimposed horizontal layers, each of which represented an occupation level or city. These layers, or 'strata', were seen as synonymous with ethnic groups referred to in historical sources. The labelling of each of the identified strata with names such as 'Jewish', 'Seleucid', and 'Israelite' clearly illustrates this. These strata were linked to ethnic groups in two ways. Firstly, due to the general prevalence of culture-historical thought at the time, material culture was associated with particular ethnic groups to allow it to be slotted into its chronological and historical place in the archaeological sequence. Secondly, some of these material culture types could be related to dated material in Egypt or the Mediterranean. As a result, the strata surrounding the dated material could be ascribed to peoples mentioned in historical sources that fitted in chronologically and historically to form a relative archaeological sequence. From the outset, chronology and typology thus formed the focus of archaeology in the southern Levant. As a result of these developments, material culture became associated with various ethnic groups which allowed a chronological sequence to be established. Of particular importance to the development of Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant, was the fact that certain ceramic types and seal impressions had come to be regarded as definitive of the 'Jewish' period.

2.5 Archaeology in the Southern Levant Pre-World War I

2.5.1 Early Developments in the Architectural Characterisation of the Iron Age and the Consolidation of Iron Age Chronology

At the turn of the century, the British monopoly on excavation in Palestine ended. German archaeological activity in particular increased in the wake of Kaiser Wilhelm II's visit to Palestine in 1898 (Silberman 1982: 162-165). New excavations by German archaeologists were begun at Jericho, Megiddo, Taanach and Shechem (Weippert and Weippert 1988: 90). Besides imperial

interests, the intellectual context of early German archaeology in the southern Levant can be found in the controversy over German biblical scholarship at the time (Silberman 1993b: 548; Moorey 1991). In contrast to the conservative, literal approach of English and American scholars, widespread German acceptance of biblical criticism, especially after the publication of Wellhausen's *Prolegomena* in 1878, produced a radical, evolutionary understanding of the development of monotheism (Hahn 1970; Rogerson 1984). In Wellhausen's book, the 'prophetic' stage of Israel's religion was seen as the unique point of origin of modern Western religious belief (Rogerson 1984: 257-272). However, when German excavations at Babylon began in 1899, other German scholars argued against Israel's historical uniqueness, preferring to see in Sumerian religion a more general source for biblical faith (e.g. Delitszch 1903). This came to be known as the 'Babel und Bibel' debate. German archaeology in the southern Levant was initially involved neither in support of the 'Babel hypothesis' nor in the sustenance of Wellhausen's ideas, but in attempts to counteract them. Indeed, the primary reason that E. Sellin began excavations at Tell Taanach in 1902 for example, was to disprove the theology of Wellhausen and the 'Pan-Babylonists' (Silberman 1993b: 548-549).

G. Schumacher's excavations at Tell el-Mutesellim (identified with Megiddo; see Figure 2) between 1903 and 1905 were also motivated by similar concerns. Schumacher had been hired by the Deutsche Palästina Verein, founded in 1877 by the Lutheran Church, to direct its first tell excavation (Moorey 1991: 46). In 1903, when the 'Babel und Bibel' controversy was raging in Europe, they decided to begin excavations at Megiddo since they believed that this important northern site had the potential to contribute significantly to issues raised by the 'Babel und Bibel' debate (ibid.: 34). Schumacher's excavations at Tell el-Mutesellim were of particular importance to the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, since they brought to light for the first time significant architectural remains consisting of a number of public buildings that were ascribed to the 'Jewish' period, as defined by Bliss and Macalister (Schumacher 1908; Wightman 1985: 10-11).

Around the same time, American archaeologists began excavations at Samaria (traditionally identified as the capital of the northern Kingdom of Israel; see Figure 2) under the direction of George Andrew Reisner. Like Petrie, Reisner was an Egyptologist who worked briefly in Palestine as an interlude to his work in Egypt, and who had developed his own excavation methods at his excavations in Upper Egypt (Moorey 1991: 35-36). He clearly understood the structure of a tell, and was one of the first to recognise that the only way in which this structure could be correctly phased and dated, was through careful recognition, separation, and recording of the layers of debris in and around the buildings on the site (Reisner *et al.* 1924: 42). Reisner's method was thus to examine in

detail the debris deposits between wall foundations, and to keep the artefacts from each deposit separate. By carefully noting the relationship between debris deposits and architectural features, Reisner was able to present a more detailed picture of the stratification of a site than any of his colleagues (Moorey 1991: 35). Unfortunately, Reisner's methods never really took hold in Palestine, since after his return to Egypt, his main collaborator at Samaria, Fisher, continued to use more archaic methods (see section 2.6.2.3 below). However, Reisner applied his excavation technique to the site of Samaria and was able to recognise different building styles in the 'Jewish' period, identifying an 'earlier' and a 'later' style (Reisner *et al.* 1924). In doing so, he provided the first substantial information on the material culture of the 'Jewish' period since the excavations at Megiddo. The findings of these excavations did not have an immediate impact however, due to summarily, in the case of Megiddo, and late published, in the case of Samaria, results (Wightman 1985: 11).

Up to the beginning of World War I, British excavations continued, but on a smaller scale than before. Working for the PEF, Macalister undertook excavations at Gezer between 1902 and 1909 (Macalister 1912; see Figure 2), and Mackenzie at Beth Shemesh between 1911 and 1912 (Mackenzie 1911; 1913; see Figure 1). In particular, their work elaborated Thiersch's ideas concerning 'Philistine' pottery (Mackenzie 1911: 84; 1913: 9, 33). Macalister's book *The Philistines: Their History and Civilisation* (1913) in particular, attempted to define more closely the archaeological transition from 'Amorite/Canaanite' to 'Philistine/Israelite' (Macalister 1913: 121-122). It was the British excavations at Ashkelon (see Figure 2) by J. Garstang and W.J. Phythian-Adams in the 1920s however, that really consolidated the chronological separation between the imported Mycenean pottery and the local painted pottery that had been identified with the Philistines. In an article entitled *Philistine Origins in the Light of Palestinian Archaeology* (1923), Phythian-Adams supported and elaborated the theory on Philistine origins, and reaffirmed the association between particular types of local painted pottery and the Philistines (Phythian-Adams 1923: 20-27). Although generally accepted at the time (e.g. Vincent 1922; Saussey 1924), this association only came to be firmly established a few years later by Albright's excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim (Albright 1932: 54-61; see section 2.6.2.3).

2.5.2 Summary

Through the archaeological excavations undertaken in the southern Levant before World War I, the upper and lower dates of the 'Jewish' period in this region continued to be formulated in terms of pottery. These dates became more firmly established in particular through the work of Macalister, Mackenzie, Garstang, and Phythian-Adams. In addition, conceptions of the intervening Hebrew

Monarchical period (tenth to sixth centuries BC) were built up around the idea of architectural style through the excavations at Megiddo and Samaria. This early reliance on architecture to define periods was conditioned not only by the excavated material but also by the numerous biblical references to the building activities of David, Solomon and their successors. The biblical passage I Kings 9:15 listing the building activities of Solomon was cited in particular by a number of scholars such as Petrie and Schumacher, in reference to the excavated architecture in the so-called 'Jewish' layers which they attributed to the Hebrew Monarchy (Wightman 1985: 12-13). The passage I Kings 9:15 has been translated as follows:

> 'And this is the account of the forced labour program which King Solomon raised: for the building of the house of Yahweh, his own house, the *millo*, Jerusalem's wall, and Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer' (Wightman 1990: 6).

The architecturally biased conception of 'Israelite culture' based on the biblical text, and its implications for archaeological practice in the southern Levant, were consolidated in the years after World War I.

2.6 Archaeology in the Southern Levant between the World Wars

2.6.1 Introduction

During World War I archaeological activity in the southern Levant came to a halt. The period between the wars however, developed into one of the most influential in the history of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. This was largely due to two traditions in biblical scholarship that developed in Germany and America. These traditions sprouted two major approaches to 'Israelite history' which came to dominate the field of south Levantine archaeology in the 1920s and 1930s. The German tradition began in Leipzig under the influence of A. Alt and was continued in Bonn by M. Noth. The American approach began in Baltimore with W. F. Albright and was perpetuated by G. E. Wright (Hayes 1987: 5).

2.6.2 The Influence of German Biblical Scholarship on South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology

2.6.2.1 Albrecht Alt (1883-1956) and Martin Noth (1902-1968)

In the tradition of the 'history of religions' school, with its general scepticism towards the historical value of the patriarchal and Exodus narratives, as well as its widely held conviction that the literary forms of the biblical traditions each had their own definable history which directly reflected the

historical context of their emergence in Israelite history, A. Alt sought to establish the historical origin and character of the rise of the period of the judges and of the Israelite monarchy. His focus was on integrating his understanding of biblical and extra-biblical texts and archaeology with his reconstruction of the historical, social, and anthropological realities of ancient Palestine (Thompson 1992: 27). Alt's approach led to several immensely influential conclusions concerning various aspects of the Old Testament narratives. Although Alt did not undertake any significant archaeological fieldwork himself, his ideas concerning the history of Israel were very influential in the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology.

Alt's seminal work on the Israelite monarchy *Die Staatenbildung der Israeliten in Palastina: verfassungsgeschichtliche Studien* (1930) represents the classic formulation of the formation of an Israelite state in the southern Levant which set the agenda for the study of Israelite history (Whitelam 1996: 129). Alt's guiding principle was that the nation state defined history. The struggle for national self-determination and self-consciousness therefore formed key elements in his history of Israel (ibid.: 131-132). Indeed, the underlying presupposition that the history of the region had to be understood in terms of national entities was set out in the opening sentences of Alt's study. He stated that the time during which the tribes of Israel were migrating from the 'southern wastelands in the mountain regions of Palestine' coincided with the arrival in the lowlands of Aegean groups including the Philistines. He claimed that it was not possible to 'understand the history of Palestine during the following centuries without first grasping the difference in the way of life and the achievements of the two nations after they had settled in Palestine' (Alt 1966: 173). Alt thus stressed that Israel was founded as a 'nation state' and that rather than being influenced by the Canaanite states, Israel was influenced by what Alt described as the 'national foundations' of Edom, Moab, Ammon and Aram (ibid.: 185-200).

Alt's construction of the Israelite state clearly echoed the ideals of the European nation state in its emphasis on boundaries, common identity, and political organisation led by 'great men'. Indeed, as Sasson has shown, the context in which he worked was a significant factor in determining his conception of the past (Sasson 1981). Biblical scholars of the German historical school took their framework from the secular history of the ideal nation (Sasson 1981: 8-11; Hayes and Prussner 1985: 135: Whitelam 1998: 50). Nineteenth century German historians who were witnessing the fusion of disparate states into a Hohenzollernian entity, searched their pasts for prognostications on the rise of the nation state. This tendency created a heritage of scholarship in which the nation-state received the greatest share of historiographical attention because it was perceived as the highest manifestation of a culture (Sasson 1981: 8-9). Alt's training in German historiography ensured that

the 'nation-state' model gained its greatest application to biblical scholarship through his works (ibid.; Whitelam 1998: 49).

The trends in biblical scholarship set up by Alt were continued by his most distinguished pupil M. Noth (Hayes 1987: 5). Indeed, Noth expressed the defining moment of the history of Israel as the reign of David in which 'Israel's progress to political power entered a completely new and decisive phase' (Noth 1960: 179). In addition, he emphasised that the newness of the situation was confirmed by the introduction of a new 'historical tradition' in the Old Testament, a 'historical record, a work of scholarship' (ibid.). The connection between the rise of modern historiography and its focus on the nation state with an emphasis on the uniqueness of great statesmen and the importance of state archives is thus clearly represented in Noth's vision of the past (Whitelam 1996: 136). Noth's understanding of the Israelite state is thus a clear reflection of the ideals of the nineteenth European nation state (ibid.: 139).

Alt and Noth's influential ideas concerning the history of Israel were elaborated and perpetuated by a number of other well-known biblical scholars including G. von Rad, J. Bright, J.A. Soggin, and C. Meyers. Although the views of these scholars differed on some points, it is remarkable how similar their ideas were concerning the emergence of Israel in the southern Levant. In particular, the idea that the biblical texts represented state archives was commonly accepted. They were therefore used as the primary source for their reconstructions of Israelite history. Due to their reliance on the Old Testament as an historical source, these histories amounted to little more than a *précis* of the biblical narratives (Whitelam 1996: 142-143). The model of the nation state and the location of state archives which in their view formed the basis of history writing, became so dominant that their constructions of the imagined past of Israel coincided (ibid.). In this way, the idea of Israel as a nation state under the leadership of 'great men' which defined a 'golden age' became the dominant twentieth-century western conception of 'ancient Israel'.

2.6.2.2 The Influence of Alt's Conception of 'Ancient Israel' on South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology

Although Alt never actually undertook any archaeological fieldwork, his ideas were immensely influential on the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. Because south Levantine Iron Age archaeology at this time was regarded as the physical manifestation of the biblical narratives, the material evidence was interpreted - following Alt's conception of 'ancient Israel' - as representing a powerful state led by great men. However, an analysis of the Iron Age material from the southern Levant on its own terms would not necessarily have produced such an interpretation.

Indeed, evidence for large-scale organisation of people and resources, prestige and propaganda, and monumental architecture like in ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt for example, is lacking in the southern Levant. Alt's vision of the history of ancient Israel thus determined to a great extent the interpretative framework of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology.

Translated into archaeological practice, this meant that the implicit assumption of scholars in the southern Levant was that they were excavating nation states with fixed borders and national characteristics. Research questions and interpretative strategies thus revolved around the location of political boundaries and the identification of national traits. Examples of this include Glueck's interpretation of border forts along the 'eastern border' of Edom (Glueck 1935; 1947), Aharoni's ideas concerning the Judaean 'border forts' in the Negev (Aharoni 1963a; 1964b; 1967), and Amiran's division of Iron Age II pottery styles into 'northern' ('Israelite') and 'southern' ('Judaean') styles (Amiran 1969). The conception of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology in terms of nation states has been so influential that even today scholarship is still dominated by this idea. This is clearly demonstrated by a number of recent studies, including for example Herr's work on 'national scripts' (Herr 1980), Kletter's interpretation of 'Judaean' pillar figurines as a national 'Judaean' material trait (Kletter 1996; 1999), Beit-Arieh's interpretation of 'Edomite' pottery as an ethnic/national marker (Beit-Arieh 1995a; 1999), Herr's summary of the Iron Age II in terms of nation states and their 'national characteristics' (Herr 1997), and Dearman's argument for a 'national Edomite religion' (Dearman 1995). It is thus clear that Alt's ideas still underpin the present understanding of the Levantine Iron Age. Indeed, while Alt and Noth's ideas have been successfully challenged in biblical studies (Whitelam 1996: 129-135; Thompson 1992: 27-47), the archaeological framework that their ideas helped to create has not been significantly reassessed.

2.6.3 The Influence of American Biblical Scholarship on South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology

2.6.3.1 William Foxwell Albright (1891-1971)

Most British and American scholarship, with its cultural and philosophical heritage radically different from that of Germany, did not fully adopt either the methodology or the conclusions of the German historical-critical approach (Rogerson 1984). The fundamental difference stemmed from the greater reverence accorded to the Bible in American and British society so that many of the developments of biblical criticism coming from Germany were not positively received in America (Whitelam 1998: 50). European scholars raised issues that could rarely be examined with full candour in America since they questioned the historical trustworthiness of the Bible. As a result,

> '[b]y the 1880s, scholars of the Near Orient in the United States saw their studies in the front lines of a defence of the Old Testament. They also believed that a scientifically defended history of the Israelites would fit in with the histories of other ancient peoples and merge with the history of the West. They wanted a defensible spiritual basis for human history and sought to link it to a story that would explain present society' (Kuklick 1996: 24).

It was these ideas that formed the basis of the distinctive American approach to biblical studies that began to emerge in the early twentieth century (Sasson 1981: 11).

One of the main proponents of this American tradition in biblical studies was W.F. Albright. Albright was an apologist for a traditional outlook; he believed the Bible was true, not only in terms of precepts and concepts properly articulated and formulated, but in a historical sense as well (Miller and Campbell 1979: 42; Long 1997a: 87; Whitelam 1996: 79-87). In particular, it was Albright's use of the model of the 'Chosen People' who came from outside, who were given their land by divine fiat and who were able to take over the land with divine help, that placed his work firmly within the American framework of scholarship (Sasson 1981: 11-13; Whitelam 1998: 51). This model encompassed a mirror image of perceptions of American origins and the rise of the American empire. The concept of 'manifest destiny' drew a direct continuum between past and present in which America became the new Israel (Whitelam 1998: 51). Albright, and American scholarship generally, thus emphasised the manifestation of divine will in the historical realm with the giving of the land of Israel and the rise of the Davidic state. As Sasson has succinctly put it;

> 'It ought not to be surprising, therefore, that a consciousness which has expressed itself in terms of an archetyped, secularised, sacred history could reverse the procedure and find eminent plausibility in a sacred history which seems to anticipate the many moments of American history. Moreover, because this consciousness was expressed so early in American history, whether from the preacher's pulpit or from the politician's stump, it became possible to regard the ancient Hebrews as similarly endowed with an innate sense of their own past. These two perceptions eventually permitted biblical scholarship in America to presume that however 'late' were the penning down of the traditions, (i) the Hebrew's 'facts' were based on authentic, historically accurate traditions, and (ii) the manner in which his 'facts' were structured offered a plausible reconstruction of his earlier history' (Sasson 1981: 13).

This view of Old Testament history is clearly reflected in Albright's work. Indeed, the belief in the manifestation of divine will in the historical realm can be clearly recognised in his whole philosophy of history, which he first presented in *From the Stone Age to Christianity* (1940) and in *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel* (1942). His philosophy was informed by an evolutionary scheme which Albright did not regard as the product of random chance, since history, in Albright's view, was the realm of divine revelation (Long 1997a: 82). Indeed, in Albright's synthesis all history belonged to the realm of theology (Whitelam 1996: 81-82).

His evolutionary scheme elaborated a broad classification of human history based on human mental activity. Underlying the evolutionary narrative of his writings was a typology of mental phenomena, which Albright used to describe both the development of human cultural achievement in the ancient Near East, and the inherent, natural possibilities of human reasoning (Long 1997a: 82; 1997b). Albright believed that the cultural and religious ideas of human beings in the Near East demonstrably evolved from primitive beginnings to the highest truths of Christianity. Albright's typology of mental achievement was thus a powerful tool within the framework provided by his apologetic purpose, with which to assert the exclusive and exclusionary privilege of Christians alone to possess highest, truly universal, religious truth (Long 1997a: 89). Furthermore, the typology aided the attempt to assert cultural continuity between the Bible and contemporary Western values, including attachment to democracy (ibid.: 94). Albright presented these ideas in a 1961 lecture which concluded with a sweeping defence of Western democracies (ibid.: 91) but he had already touched on this theme in earlier writings (Albright 1922a; 1941). His argument thus developed from apologetics for the historical reliability of the Bible, to claims about the Bible's prime religious value, to both of these supporting Western democratic institutions through his evolutionary scheme (Long 1997a: 91-94).

Albright's vision of history, with its emphasis on the veracity of scripture, the assertion of cultural continuity with - and thus defence of - modern Western political forms, and the placement of history in the realm of divine revelation, was of immense influence in twentieth century biblical studies (Hayes and Prussner 1985: 216-217). His approach to biblical history also greatly influenced the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology.

2.6.3.2 The Influence of Albright's Biblical Scholarship on Archaeological Practice in the Southern Levant

Since Albright believed that the Bible was true in a historical sense, he regarded archaeology as the physical manifestation of the biblical narratives. For Albright therefore, archaeological data served only to verify what he believed in the first place (Miller and Campbell 1979: 44). In his view, archaeology thus had its place in enriching and sustaining the narratives of the Old Testament. In other words, for him the biblical texts provided an historical framework and an interpretative structure for the hundreds of discoveries that were being made in the newly developing field of south Levantine archaeology (Thompson 1992: 12).

In addition to this overall view of the relationship between the biblical narratives and south Levantine archaeology, Albright's evolutionary ideas determined his approach to the Iron Age

archaeology of this region. His evolutionary scheme made the replacement of one culture by another - like the replacement of the Canaanites by the Israelites for example - seem natural. In addition, his evolutionary, historically cyclical view of cultural change as successive stages of cultural development strongly echoed Petrie's eugenical ideas. Indeed, Albright wrote that the Israelites were a 'wild folk, endowed with primitive energy and a ruthless will to exist' and that was fortunate, he continued,

> 'since the resulting decimation of the Canaanites [by the Israelites] prevented the complete fusion of the two kindred folk which would almost inevitably have depressed Yahwistic standards to a point where recovery was impossible' (Albright 1940: 281).

Albright's conception of history thus led him to visualise the history of the southern Levant as a sequence of violent, historically recorded (or archaeologically inferred) racial or ethnic conquests, the material evidence for which he saw in the equation of new pottery styles and destruction levels with the arrival of foreign ethnic groups (Albright 1932: 24-58).

In other words, his evolutionary scheme based on religious concerns drove an archaeological agenda firmly embedded within an historical paradigm, where changes in material culture were equated with specific historical episodes as presented in texts. For the southern Levant this meant changes in pottery equalled changes in culture history. Even though Albright's conception of history was primarily evolutionary, his interpretation of archaeological remains as a record of diffusion and conquest of various historical ethnic groups thus reflected the wider culture-historical framework of archaeology at the time. Albright's work therefore perpetuated not only the methods of archaeological interpretation used by Petrie, but also those used by Bliss, Macalister, Mackenzie, Thiersch, and Welch.

Albright's evolutionary concept of history also had an immense effect on ceramic studies in the southern Levant. Just like Petrie, Albright explicitly applied the organic metaphor of birth, growth, maturity, and decay to artefact development, in addition to the ethnic labelling of pottery types (Albright 1964: 20; Dever 1993a: 26-27; Long 1993; 1997a). Because of historical periodisation, this created the need for ceramic types to follow a developmental arc in a specifically allotted time frame. In other words, because each ceramic style was associated with a particular historical period, a change in period was assumed to have caused a change in ceramic style. Ceramic change and development was thus 'fitted' to these historical 'slices of time', rather than being determined on its own terms. Furthermore, since the strata of tells were attributed to various historical periods on the basis of changing ceramic styles, the cultural and chronological sequences of these tells also followed a prescribed developmental arc in a specifically allotted time frame. The idea that ceramic

change and tell formation may not occur in lock-step with the events described in documentary history, or indeed that they might not relate to those events at all, was not considered. In addition, these ideas suited the newly developing subject of south Levantine archaeology, since there was an overriding concern with chronology. The focus on chronology meant that strict typological approaches were needed where the emphasis was placed on creating comparable bodies of material to allow dates to be determined for material deriving from wide spatial and temporal horizons. Variability was therefore de-emphasised and the focus was on 'diagnostic' types (Dessel and Joffe 2000: 32).

Although many of Albright's specific approaches have long since been re-evaluated, the interpretative and chronological framework they helped to create has remained in place. Indeed, even today the main emphasis of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology's interpretative framework remains based on the equation of destruction levels and the appearance of new material culture styles with historically recorded (or archaeologically inferred) military campaigns or conquests by ethnic groups (e.g. Ussishkin 1978; 1983; Kochavi 1980; Cohen 1981; Biran 1983; Kelm and Mazar 1985; Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985; 1991; Oren 1993; Finkelstein 1992c; 1996; Cohen and Yisrael 1995; Beit-Arieh 1995a; 1999; Finkelstein *et al.* 2000a).

2.6.3.3 Albright's Excavations at Tell el-Ful (1922-1923) and Tell Beit Mirsim (1926-1932)

In the early 1920s Albright became the most influential archaeologist at the American School of Oriental Research (ASOR) in Jerusalem (Kuklick 1996; King 1983). Although Albright was a Semitic philologist and Bible historian by training (Sasson 1993), he had moved towards archaeology after assuming the directorship of the ASOR in 1920 (King 1983).

At the ASOR Albright became the protégé of Clarence Fisher who was an influential member of ASOR in the 1920s, as well as being archaeologically the most highly trained. This was due to his involvement as an architect in the excavations at Nippur between 1898 and 1900, where he was exposed to the excavation methods used there (Moorey 1991: 56; Larsen 1996; Kuklick 1996). Before World War I he had also served as draughtsman at Reisner's excavations at Samaria between 1908 and 1910 (Wightman 1985: 17). His field methods unfortunately did not differ much from those he had learnt at Nippur, despite his involvement with Reisner at Samaria. Fisher was an architect, who instructed his team of diggers to work in arbitrary 30 cm levels, taking no recorded account of the actual bed-lines of debris which allowed for the accurate recognition of stratigraphy (Moorey 1991: 56). After the war, Fisher took the initiative for American research in Palestine by

beginning excavations at Beth-Shan in 1921, and subsequently at Megiddo and Beth Shemesh (Moorey 1991: 56). For many years after these excavations he continued to influence his students and colleagues (Wightman 1985: 18). It was in particular through his protégé Albright however, that Fisher's excavation methods became firmly established in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology (ibid.; Wightman 1985: 18; Kuklick 1996).

In addition to Fisher's influence, Albright's visit to the ongoing British excavations at Ashkelon in 1920 influenced his approach to archaeological fieldwork (Silberman 1993c: 11). Indeed, Albright later recalled how Phythian-Adams offered him his first introduction to archaeology by demonstrating how the sequence of pottery at Ashkelon revealed a saga of civilisation, ethnic migration, and conquest, that began with the arrival of the 'non-Semitic troglodytes' and proceeded through successive epochs of 'Amorites', 'Hyksos', 'Canaanites', and 'Philistines', up to Classical times (Albright 1922b: 11-18). Garstang and Phythian-Adams' stress on ethnic movement in their historical interpretations was to have a lasting effect on Albright's scholarship.

Indeed, a few days after visiting Ashkelon, Albright presented his epoch-making paper *A Revision of Early Hebrew Chronology* (1921) at a meeting of the Palestine Oriental Society. In this paper he arranged the great events of the biblical narratives on a neat chronological scale. Talking of great wars and migrations, Albright evoked then-current historical and racial theories to speak of a great Indo-European movement towards the Mediterranean where the invaders intermingled with the Semitic peoples of an earlier movement from Mesopotamia. It was in this Bronze Age multicultural ferment, he believed, that a new, monotheistic religion eventually arose (Albright 1921: 49-79). Furthermore, due to Garstang and Phythian-Adams' use of pottery at Ashkelon, Albright became convinced that it was not necessary to excavate large sites with huge staffs to search for monumental architecture in order to add to the understanding of the biblical world. With the aid of precise pottery analysis, he argued, all sites could be dated, assigned to a particular ethnic group, and thus be made to reveal their biblical history (Silberman 1993c: 12).

These ideas were the motivation for Albright's first excavation at Tell el-Ful (see Figure 1) between 1922 and 1923 which lasted for only a few weeks (Albright 1924; Dever 1993a: 31). At Tell el-Ful, Albright defined a ceramic chronology based on the assumed history of the site. This history was determined by his identification of the site with biblical Gibeah (Albright 1924). The sequence of events at Gibeah described in the Old Testament thus provided the chronological framework with which the pottery and stratigraphy was equated. In turn, the occurrence of pottery types dated to those periods was seen as evidence for the biblical narratives concerning Gibeah. The interpretation

of the excavation results at Tell el-Ful was thus based on a circular argument (Wightman 1985: 18; Silberman 1993c: 12).

Also in 1922, Albright participated in an agreement on chronology as part of his role in attending the meetings of the Archaeological Advisory Council of the newly founded Department of Antiquities under the British Mandate. In the 'Jerusalem Chronology' of 1922, signed by Garstang, Vincent, Albright, and Phythian-Adams, the foundations for the current archaeological periodisation of the southern Levant were established. The ethnic chronological categories 'Canaanite', 'Philistine', and 'Israelite' were neatly placed within the Stone, Bronze, and Iron Ages of technological development (Silberman 1993c: 13). Despite the change in terminology however, chronological and cultural designations were still based on ethnic categorisation.

Between 1926 and 1932, Albright commenced excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim (see Figure 1). These excavations were arguably his most influential contribution to the newly developing framework of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. Tell Beit Mirsim was located in the southern hills of Palestine and was at the time identified with biblical Debir (Running and Freedman 1975: 143-163). Despite finishing in 1932, the Iron Age excavation results were not published until 1943. Due to the influence of Fisher and his restricted archaeological experience at Ashkelon and Ful, Albright excavated Tell Beit Mirsim without paying much attention to the details of depositional stratification (Dever 1993a: 31). Due to the prestige of the American School however, and not least the prestige of Albright himself, his results for stratigraphy and ceramic chronology were not questioned and were uncritically absorbed into later work (ibid.; Wightman 1985: 18). Indeed, Albright and his work were still being hailed as 'legendary' and 'brilliant' many years later by leading American archaeologists (e.g. Dever 1980b: 43).

At Tell Beit Mirsim Albright uncovered architectural remains which he distributed between two successive strata (A and B) spanning the Iron Age, which in turn were each divided into two sub-phases (Albright 1943; see Figure 6a). Albright's interpretation of the stratigraphical sequence at Tell Beit Mirsim rested entirely on biblical accounts. Between the two strata, Albright identified a destruction layer. This layer was preceded by the construction of a city wall in casemate form in Phase B. The pottery in the successive Phase A lacked the characteristic 'Philistine' painted wares, but was closely related to other local early Iron Age shapes. Albright concluded that the fortification of the town must have occurred after the Philistine domination, but before the end of the Judahite Monarchy (ibid.: 64-68). This conclusion was based on Thiersch's article, which had associated the arrival of the Philistines with the local painted pottery found in southern Palestine (Thiersch 1908).

This article had led to the implication that the appearance and disappearance of this painted pottery over time related directly to the rise and fall of Philistine political control in the Judaean foothills during the reigns of Saul and David (in the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC). Albright thus inferred that the phase B town had been fortified by Solomon and destroyed by Pharaoh Sheshank I within the tenth century BC (ibid.: 36-38). The Solomonic construction date was taken from the biblical tradition I Kings 9: 15-20 that related Solomon as the first and most prolific builder after the Philistine conflicts.

Phase A, which succeeded Phase B, was also interpreted by Albright to have ended in a destruction layer (ibid.). Under destruction debris in the south-east sector of excavations were found two stamp seals bearing the text 'Eliakim steward of Jochin'. Albright assumed that 'Jochin' was an abbreviated form of 'Jehoiachin', and he made the further assumption that the seal referred to the king of that name who had ruled briefly in Judah c. 598 BCE. The pottery found with these seals was similar to that from the 'Jewish' levels of pre-WWI excavations. As a result, he dated the destruction of Stratum A to the early sixth century BC (Albright 1932).

In Stratum A2 many stamped 'lamelekh' jar-handles were found (Albright 1943). These stamp seals were already associated with a late 'Judahite' date through their attribution to the later 'Jewish' period by the early excavations of Bliss, Mackenzie, and Macalister. For Albright, these 'lamelekh' stamps thus provided support for the late 'Judahite' date of both the pottery assemblage and the 'Eliakim' stamps. Through circular argumentation, their association with the dating of Tell Beit Mirsim Stratum A meant that they became firmly dated to the late Judahite Monarchy (Wightman 1985: 23).

At the time, the excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim were fundamental to the emerging conceptions of Iron Age material culture and chronology. The discussion of Albright's work at Tell Beit Mirsim clearly demonstrates however, that Albright relied entirely on biblical accounts and historical-archaeological parallelism for the interpretation of the stratigraphical sequence at this site. The main source of 'independent' dating for the site was provided by the 'Eliakim' seals. A number of studies have however questioned the attribution of the 'Eliakim' seals to King Jehoiachin, concluding that they may equally have been private seal impressions of a different period (Avigad 1976; Ussishkin 1976). The arguments on which Albright based his chronological and historical conclusions regarding Tell Beit Mirsim can therefore be shown to be highly questionable. Even though the main sources of evidence used to date Tell Beit Mirsim have been fundamentally undermined, the chronological framework that they helped to create remains unchanged. This is in no small part due

to the contribution of G. E. Wright, whose work firmly consolidated and perpetuated Albright's methods and interpretations.

2.6.3.4 George Ernest Wright (1909-1974)

It was Wright who carried Albright's ideas forward into a new generation (Hayes 1987: 5). In Wright's career archaeology converged specifically with the biblical theology movement. For him, much more than for Albright even, archaeology's role was to expose the historical basis of the Judaeo-Christian faith, to demonstrate how revelation had come through history (Moorey 1991: 77-78). The stress on revelation through history was one of the main tenets of biblical theology, which contended that revelation came through historical events, not in ideas or propositions, but in events in which God intervened and was revealed. Thus, revelation came from outside the human and historical processes but utilised humans who could understand and interpret the intervention of God. The Bible was thus primarily viewed as a record of this revelation and was conceived of fundamentally as a book of history (Hayes and Prussner 1985: 216). The emphasis on history and revelation in history encouraged efforts to attempt external substantiation of the historical events reported in the Old Testament. Archaeology therefore came to be closely associated with the desire to offer substantiation for the historicity of biblical reports about events or about the events presupposed behind the texts (ibid.: 217). This became a distinct characteristic of American biblical scholarship.

At the height of his influence in the 1950s and 1960s, Wright thus came close to representing an American 'school' of Old Testament interpretation, which gave archaeology a very significant role in understanding the Bible (Moorey 1991: 100-103). For Wright and his students, biblical theology and archaeology not merely went, but had to go, hand in hand if an adequate comprehension of the biblical materials was to be achieved (ibid.; Hayes and Prussner 1985: 217). Archaeology had of course already, as was shown in section 2.3.2 above, played a role in biblical studies in the late nineteenth century. What was new in the so-called biblical theology period was the close association between archaeological and theological interests and the desire to see archaeological work as supportive of the biblical portrayal of Israelite history and thus, indirectly, supportive of the contentions that God acts and is revealed in historical events (Hayes and Prussner 1985: 217).

Through the influence of the biblical theology movement, it became customary to assert that the Bible was studied historically because the Old Testament texts represented historical sources (ibid.). This was used as substantiation for the view of the biblical narratives as history. Biblical texts were studied in a historical manner not in the first instance because they represented history however, but

because such historical orientation was the accepted and approved method of study in the nineteenth century (Oden 1980: 149; see section 2.3.1 above). The idea that the biblical texts had *come to be perceived* as historical sources during the nineteenth century was not considered. Indeed, the nineteenth century inheritance was so powerful that for a long time twentieth century biblical studies were directed by nineteenth century concerns. So much so in fact, that the historical approach came to be seen as self-evidently correct and as particularly appropriate to the alleged character of the biblical texts (ibid.). Through the biblical theology movement, the idea that the biblical narratives formed historical sources and should be studied from an historical perspective, therefore became firmly implanted in biblical and archaeological thought. In biblical studies this meant that the writing of 'biblical history' continued uncritically until the present day (see Chapter 4 for a more detailed discussion of this). For archaeology it meant that growing concerns over the use of biblical texts as an interpretative framework for south Levantine Iron Age archaeology were staved off with the argument that contemporary historical sources for the period could not simply be ignored (Hayes and Prussner 1985: 216-217). Both of these developments had important consequences for the development of archaeological practice in the southern Levant.

2.6.3.5 The Influence of Wright's Biblical Scholarship on Archaeological Practice in the Southern Levant

Like Albright, Wright's theological concerns drove an archaeological agenda firmly embedded within an historical paradigm, where changes in material culture were equated to specific historical episodes or ethnic groups as presented in the biblical text. Wright's contributions to ceramic studies clearly illustrate this. In his book *The Pottery of Palestine from the Earliest Times to the End of the Bronze Age* (1937) he was mainly concerned with the chronological implications of ceramic typology. In this he followed Albright's work on pottery. Indeed, in setting out their immensely influential ceramic typological contributions Albright and Wright created an easy-to-use template for relating specific form and decorative types to relative chronological designations and ethnic groups. This template focused on a number of specific sites however, which resulted in the subordination of local sequences to a single allegedly representative sequence (Dessel and Joffe 2000: 34-35).

The ceramic studies by Albright and Wright were immensely influential because they were greatly relied upon by other excavators to date their material. The inherent flaws in their work, especially the link to ethnic groups and the down-playing of ceramic variability, were thus incorporated into the interpretation and dating of many sites. In addition, the many subsequent typological discussions which relied heavily on their work, were structured by material with inherent problems.

Albright's and Wright's ceramic studies were also fixed in the popular eye by influential publications such as Wright's *Biblical Archaeology* (1962), and were brought to the broader scholarly audience by Albright's contributions to *Relative Chronologies in Old World Archaeology* (1954) and its successors (Dessel and Joffe 2000: 35). In this way, cumulative flaws in archaeological method were perpetuated in the interpretative framework of south Levantine archaeology. Furthermore, Albright's and Wright's work established a pattern of reliance on 'expert-opinion' to date and classify Iron Age material culture in the southern Levant. The canonical role in this respect played by R. Amiran's *Ancient Pottery of the Holy Land* (1969) may also be mentioned here.

Wright's approach to archaeology was fundamentally culture-historical, since his theological beliefs drove an archaeological agenda firmly embedded within an historical paradigm, where changes in material culture were equated to specific historical episodes or ethnic groups as presented in the biblical text. By the 1960s however, the New Archaeology movement in North America had started to question this approach to archaeology. Archaeologists became increasingly concerned with how and why cultural change occurred, rather than the largely descriptive exercise of culture-historical archaeology which traced what happened in prehistory in terms of cultures and their movements. The new archaeologists argued that culture constituted an integrated system, made up of different functioning sub-systems, and as a corollary archaeological remains had to be regarded as the product of a variety of past processes, rather than simply a reflection of ethnicity (Binford 1962, 1965; Clarke 1978).

At the same time, the biblical theology movement was at its height. Because the Bible was regarded fundamentally as a book of history, archaeology was used to substantiate events described in the biblical texts or the events presupposed behind the texts. The role of archaeology was thus first and foremost as an aid to writing biblical history. In other words, the aim was not, as in American and European archaeology, to investigate the daily lives of people living in the southern Levant in the Iron Age through their material remains. Rather, archaeological material was only interesting in so far as it could illuminate biblical history. This is clearly demonstrated by the absence of any published purely archaeological analyses of Iron Age archaeology prior to the 1980s (Dever 1981: 15). For this reason, the idea that the basic approach to the archaeology of the southern Levant could be seriously questioned - like the New Archaeology was doing for Europe and America - was not considered. It was simply irrelevant to the aims and objectives of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology.

Furthermore, since the Bible was a religious document, not just a historical one, it was far more important than for other historical documents to prove its historicity, since for many the Old Testament's veracity was integral to their faith. Culture-history was amenable to the aims of archaeology in its illustrative role to biblical history, since it was based on linking text to material. Any attacks on these methods could therefore not be accepted, since it would sever the study of archaeological material from its role as an aid to biblical history. This is arguably one of the main reasons that culture-history has remained the dominant framework for south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. Indeed, coupled to the institutional bias of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology through its insular position since the nineteenth century in theological departments and seminaries in Europe and America, it may be for this reason that the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology remained isolated from developments in general archaeology (Dessel and Joffe 2000: 35; Rogerson 1984).

Wright's approach to archaeology within the framework of the biblical theology movement was thus immensely influential in the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. The legacy of Wright's ideas is also felt in excavation however. His excavations at Beth Shemesh were extremely important for the newly emerging subject of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology because they consolidated Albright's findings at Tell Beit Mirsim.

2.6.3.6 Wright's Excavations at Beth Shemesh (1928-1933)

Wright and E. Grant directed excavations at Beth Shemesh (see Figure 1) between 1928 and 1933 (Grant 1929; 1931-32; 1934; Grant and Wright 1938-39). The excavators recognised two strata belonging to the Iron Age at this site (see Figure 6b). Stratum III was dated to the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC by the abundance of painted 'Philistine' pottery, which appeared after a destruction layer at the end of the Late Bronze Age. Stratum II was dated to the 'Middle Iron period', and was characterised by the disappearance of painted wares, the appearance of red-slipped and burnished wares, and ultimately by the appearance of stamped 'lamelekh' jar handles.

Two architectural phases were noted in Stratum II, eventually labelled Stratum IIa and Stratum IIb/c. Stratum IIa, which apparently included a casemate wall similar in form to the one at Tell Beit Mirsim, along with some other public buildings, was dated to the tenth century BC, again - like at Tell Beit Mirsim - with a 'Shishak' destruction at the end of the century. The pottery in Stratum IIb/c corresponded closely to that of Tell Beit Mirsim stratum A, and was therefore dated to the period of the Judahite Monarchy. The final destruction of Beth Shemesh was related to the conquest of Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC. From Wright and Grant's conclusions it is clear that their

interpretation of the stratigraphical sequence at Beth Shemesh rested entirely on parallels with biblical accounts. These parallels were based on comparisons between the material from Tell Beit Mirsim, which was itself dated by historical-archaeological parallelism, as well as direct comparisons by the excavators between the sequence at Beth Shemesh and events mentioned in the biblical texts.

Excavations were renewed at Beth Shemesh in 1990 by S. Bunimovitz and Z. Lederman on behalf of the Department of the Land of Israel Studies at Bar-Ilan University (Bunimovitz and Lederman 1993). They reported that neither architectural remains, nor any pottery dating from the seventh century was found in these excavations. They therefore argued that the final destruction of the site took place in 701 BCE by Sennacherib's campaign. Whether this dating is any more reliable is open to question, as it too relies on explicit historical-archaeological parallelism. It does however emphasise the questionable nature of Wright and Grant's interpretations. At the time however, Wright and Grant's excavation results at Beth Shemesh consolidated Albright's findings at Tell Beit Mirsim and thus played an important role in establishing the framework for Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant.

2.6.3.7 Summary: Albright and Wright's Legacy

Wright and Albright's scholarship greatly influenced the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. Indeed, the domination of the Albright-Wright paradigm is unlike anything else in the history of Near Eastern archaeology (Kuklick 1996: 185-202; Long 1997a). Firstly, their excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim and Beth Shemesh were fundamental to the emerging conception of the south Levantine Iron Age. They helped to solidify ideas concerning the beginning and end of Iron Age chronology, in other words the association of local painted pottery of Aegean style with the Philistines during the twelfth and eleventh centuries BC, and the association of 'lamelekh' jars with the late Judahite monarchy, c. 640-586 BC. Between these two dates, the excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim and Beth Shemesh uncovered casemate fortification walls (see Figure 7) and red-slipped and burnished pottery (see Figs. 8 and 9), all of which, true to culture-historical premises, began to be used as distinctively 'Israelite' cultural elements (Wightman 1985: 23).

Furthermore, particular architectural styles came to be recognised and associated with certain kings, the most influential being the 'Solomonic' casemate walls at Beth Shemesh and Tell Beit Mirsim. In each case the historical identification was inferred directly from the biblical tradition, and supported by the observation that the walls appeared soon after the disappearance of painted 'Philistine' pottery. The red-slipped, hand-burnished pottery found alongside the 'Solomonic'

architecture from then on came to stand in its own right as diagnostic for the tenth century BC, and was used to date other strata where the architecture could not be directly related to biblical history.

In addition, Albright and Wright were the first to produce comprehensive pottery studies that could be used by other scholars to date their sites. Since south Levantine archaeology at the time was still in its developmental stages, their studies - as the first systematic treatments of pottery to be produced - were relied on heavily to provide structure and coherency to the archaeological remains of the southern Levant. Albright and Wright's ideas were propagated by a number of their influential graduate students who rose to prominent academic positions throughout North America. The theory and methods promoted by Albright and Wright were thus absorbed at every level of archaeological scholarship, from excavation methods, to artefact analysis, to overall interpretation. Initially however, their theory and methods were perpetuated by the excavations at Megiddo.

2.7 The Excavations at Megiddo (1925-1939)

While the excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim and Beth Shemesh marked the beginning of particular material evidence being used to mark distinctively 'Israelite' cultural elements, the excavations at Megiddo (see Figure 2) firmly established these ideas. Megiddo was excavated over a long period of time (1925-1939) by C. Fisher and P.L.O. Guy, and as important comparative material from Tell Beit Mirsim and Beth Shemesh was being excavated at the same time, this was brought to bear on the archaeological and chronological interpretation of Megiddo. A strong fluidity in ideas therefore developed concerning the stratification and chronology of Megiddo which was expressed in several articles throughout the 1940s and 1950s (Lamon and Shipton 1939; Albright 1943; Loud 1948; Wright 1950a; 1950b). This makes it difficult to follow in detail the emergence of an overall archaeological and chronological interpretation of Megiddo.

G. Schumacher, who conducted brief excavations at Megiddo prior to Fisher and Guy's excavations between 1925 and 1939, had uncovered monumental building remains at the site. He had attributed these to the period of the Israelite Monarchy generally, and possibly to the time of Solomon on the basis of I Kings 9: 15-20, since he assumed that Solomon's building activities must have been monumental, a fitting testimony to his legendary glory and splendour (Schumacher 1908). Hence, an historical interpretative framework already formed a strong conceptual pattern when Fisher and Guy began excavations at Megiddo in 1925.

Wightman has provided a detailed discussion of their excavations at Megiddo and has highlighted the methods by which Guy reached his conclusions (Wightman 1990: 6-10). After four seasons of

excavation many buildings had been uncovered which Guy attributed to Stratum IV. These included a solid defensive wall, a public building or residence, and a series of buildings consisting of conjoined tripartite pillared halls believed by Guy to be royal stables (see Figures 10 and 11). Guy was convinced from the outset that all these public buildings belonged to Stratum IV and that they should date to the reign of Solomon (Guy 1931: 44-48). Four main assumptions formed the basis of Guy's reasoning. The first was that the large pillared halls were stables, the second that all the buildings belonged to a single building programme, the third that chariotry and cavalry were exclusive features of Solomon's reign, and the fourth that the architectural style of Stratum IV was non-Israelite (Wightman 1990: 7). The first assumption involved circular reasoning, as the identification of the pillared compounds as stables rested firmly on the biblical texts cited by the excavator, whereas the existence of these stables at Megiddo was held to confirm the texts and the Solomonic date of Stratum IV. To further support a Solomonic attribution for Stratum IV, Guy cited the evidence for 'stables' from Gezer and Tell el-Hesi, 'independently dated to the ninth or tenth century BC' (Guy 1931: 44). However, the pillared buildings found at Gezer and Tell el-Hesi had not been identified by their excavators as 'stables'. In addition, the use of the term 'independently dated' was misleading since the dates had been inferred directly from the biblical text I Kings 9: 15-20 by the excavators, thus by the same inferential process used by Guy for dating Megiddo Stratum IV (Wightman 1990: 7). Later excavations at Megiddo also proved Guy's second assumption to be incorrect. Nor could he support his third and fourth argument, since they were based on pure speculation (ibid.).

Guy's interpretation of the stratigraphical sequence at Megiddo was thus clearly based on uncritical assumptions and circular logic. At the time however, his arguments were very appealing to many scholars, since they created order in the largely un-systematised Iron Age period. New evidence was thus eagerly cited as 'independent evidence' in support of new claims. In this way cumulative errors in method and interpretation were easily introduced and perpetuated through chronological and interpretative schemes. Consequently, despite later modifications to Guy's Stratum IV stratification and chronology, his flawed conceptual methods remained unchallenged and greatly influenced later scholarly thinking, particularly within the American and Israeli schools of archaeology (ibid.).

Guy's dating of Stratum IV to the time of Solomon was formulated at an early stage of the excavations, and served as a datum from which to organise the other strata into a coherent framework (see Figure 12a). Stratum IV was thus dated to the tenth and ninth centuries BC and was interpreted as being succeeded by a long occupation in Strata III and II, spanning the eighth and seventh centuries BC (Loud 1948). Strata III and II were characterised mainly by domestic architecture based on an orthogonal grid plan, while Stratum III possessed a complex of Assyrian-

style public buildings. The Assyrian-style architecture and town planning served as the main chronological indicator for Stratum III/II, as there was little comparative ceramic material in the north of Palestine at that time (ibid.).

The response by the American school to the excavation results from Megiddo was detailed in a series of reviews between 1940 and 1950. Because of the ten-year interval between the publication of the two principal site reports (1939 and 1948) these responses had to be modified when appropriate. On the basis of the results published in *Megiddo I* (Lamon and Shipton 1939), Albright initially concerned himself with the dating of Megiddo Stratum V (Albright 1943; see Figure 12b). He lowered the terminal date of this stratum to 975 BC so that its pottery would conform to his tenth century date for Tell Beit Mirsim B3 and his eleventh century date for Tell el-Ful II (Wightman 1985: 30-31). As a direct result, Stratum IVB was moved from the 'Davidic' into the 'Solomonic' period. In addition, all the other strata were down-dated, apart from Strata III/II which remained in place.

The publication of *Megiddo II* (Loud 1948) prompted a revision of these ideas. Wright expressed the modified views in two review articles (1950a, 1950b; see Figure 12b). Incorporating the new findings from Megiddo, Wright essentially formalised Albright's earlier statement by adopting a general conflation of Strata VA and IVB, calling the new Stratum VA/IVB (Wright 1950a: 59). Agreeing with Albright's dating of Stratum IVB to the time of Solomon, Wright concluded that Stratum VA/IVB was also the Solomonic Stratum. The second Megiddo publication also reported a new gateway. Gateway 2156, with six side-chambers, was found beneath gateway 500B. Gateway 500B had already been re-dated from Stratum III to Stratum IVB by Albright in his 1943 publication. Since gateway 2156 was found beneath gateway 500B, Wright immediately allocated it to Stratum IVB (i.e. their 'Solomonic' stratum). The two gateways were thus attributed to Stratum IVB and came to regarded as characteristic 'Solomonic' architecture (Wightman 1985: 32-33). Wright also continued to refer to the pillared buildings as 'stables' and dated them to Stratum VA/IVB (Wright 1950a: 59). It is clear from this brief sketch of Albright's and Wright's reviews of the excavation results from Megiddo, that their revisions were conditioned by the biblical texts and by the pottery chronologies of Beth Shemesh and Tell Beit Mirsim. Indeed, they identified the 'Solomonic' elements at Megiddo by a detailed comparison of the Megiddo Stratum V pottery with that from Tell Beit Mirsim and Beth Shemesh whose own chronology had been inferred from the biblical traditions. Hence, the conceptual and chronological flaws in the interpretation of the stratigraphical sequences at these two sites were built into the revised Megiddo stratification.

The Albright/Wright synthesis for Megiddo, Beth Shemesh and Tell Beit Mirsim reached its definitive form in 1950 and came to represent the mainstream opinion on Iron Age chronology (Wightman 1985: 35). Attention had been directed to the archaeology of the United Monarchy, the characteristics defining the beginning and end of the Iron Age having come to be accepted without question. The excavations at Megiddo were immensely influential not only because they consolidated Albright's and Wright's ideas, but because they saw the emergence of a clear conception of material characterisation for the middle of the Iron Age period. Of particular importance in this respect were Guy's 'stables' and the six-chambered gateways. In addition, although Megiddo Stratum III/II was interpreted as an 'Assyrian' town, the pottery from this stratum provided the first comprehensive corpus of pottery for the eighth and seventh centuries BC and came to occupy an important place in later comparative studies. From the 1950s onwards however, south Levantine Iron Age archaeology was characterised by revisions of many fundamental aspects of this established chronology and the development of clear ideas concerning the material culture of the seventh and sixth centuries BC.

2.8 The Development of South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology in the 1950s

2.8.1 The Publication of the Excavations at Tell ed-Duweir-Lachish: 1953

The first newly published excavations to play an influential role in the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology in the 1950s were those at Tell ed-Duweir, commonly identified with Lachish (see Figure 2). Although the site was first excavated between 1932 and 1938 by the British Wellcome-Marston Expedition headed by J.L. Starkey, owing to his sudden death the Iron Age results of the excavation were not published until 1953 (Tufnell 1953). Because of this, the results of the excavations at Lachish did not influence the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology until the 1950s. These excavations were important in particular for the vital role they played in the emergence of ideas concerning the late Iron Age, commonly dated to seventh and sixth centuries BC.

Indeed, at Lachish two levels were uncovered that were attributed to the 'late Judahite Monarchy' by the excavators. Both levels had been heavily destroyed and the destruction was attributed to military conflict with Assyro-Babylonian armies. The destruction of the last Iron Age level, Level II, was ascribed to the second campaign of Nebuchadnezzar in c. 587/86 BC (Tufnell 1953). In deducing the construction date of the underlying Level III, O. Tufnell first pointed out the many typological differences between the pottery of Levels III and II, which argued against the attribution

of the Level III destruction to the first Babylonian campaign in 599/98 BC. The only other Assyro-Babylonian intervention in Judahite affairs which Tufnell considered relevant to the Level III destruction was the Sennacherib campaign of 701 BC, attested in both biblical and Assyrian texts (ibid.).

There were however additional reasons for Tufnell's attribution of the destruction layer of Level III to 701 BC. Firstly, she identified Tell ed-Duweir with biblical Lachish. Consequently, since both the biblical and Assyrian sources referred to the sack of Lachish by Sennacherib, Tufnell needed to find a suitable archaeological context; and since the destruction of Level III was the first during the period of the Judahite monarchy recognised at the site, it was the most obvious choice for the Sennacherib destruction (Wightman 1985: 38). Secondly, Tufnell used Diringer's classification of the royal stamp seal impressions (Diringer 1953) to show that the seal impressions found in Level III were palaeographically 'early', or in other words similar to the script of the Siloam inscription, which had for many years been ascribed to Hezekiah whose reign was commonly dated to the late eighth century BC (Tufnell 1953: 48).

Tufnell thus used converging lines of evidence to arrive at the chronology of Level III. By identifying Tell ed-Duweir with Lachish, Tufnell applied circular logic, linking archaeological remains with biblical and Assyrian texts. In other words, the equation of Tell ed-Duweir with Lachish was supported by agreement of the archaeological data with textual source material; agreement between archaeology and texts in turn reinforced the topographical equation, which then validated the search for a Sennacherib destruction level. Tufnell's reliance on the palaeographic evidence was not a valid source of independent confirmation for this chronology, since the Siloam inscription only had an assumed historical connection with Hezekiah through biblical sources (Wightman 1985: 38-39). In addition, Tufnell's analysis of the pottery fitted in with the existing framework set up by Albright and Wright. Tufnell accepted both the early sixth century BC date for the destruction of Tell Beit Mirsim Stratum A and the overall similarities between its pottery and that of Lachish III/II. Furthermore, because Stratum A2 at Tell Beit Mirsim had been dated to the ninth, eighth, and seventh centuries BC, Tufnell saw no conflict with an eighth century BC date for Lachish Level III (Tufnell 1953; 1959).

Along with Tell Beit Mirsim and Beth Shemesh, Lachish provided the foundations for the present conception of the seventh and sixth centuries in southern Israel (especially in terms of ceramics; see Figures 13 and 14). It consolidated the material characterisation first provided by Beth Shemesh and Tell Beit Mirsim for this period, particularly in terms of pottery types and stamp seals. These ideas were elaborated and perpetuated by a number of influential excavations undertaken in later years, in

particular by Israeli archaeologists, who by this time were becoming active in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology for the first time. Prior to these developments however, the 1950s saw the first of many revisions of fundamental aspects of the established conception of the middle Iron Age period. This revision was provided by K. Kenyon's publication of the pottery from the excavations at Samaria.

2.8.2 The Publication of the Excavations at Samaria: 1957

Although Samaria (see Figure 2) was first excavated in the 1930s by a British team headed by J.W. Crowfoot, owing to delays in publication the results of the excavations at Samaria were not published until 1957 (Crowfoot *et al.* 1957). Because of this, the results of the excavations did not make an impact on the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology until the late 1950s. The significance of Kenyon's report was that it represented the only dissenting voice of importance to the Albright-Wright synthesis at the time.

Kenyon dated the earliest Iron Age pottery-bearing deposits at Samaria to c. 880-850 BC through their association with walls attributed to the Omri-Ahab period. The earliest Iron Age walls at Samaria (the only earlier occupation being of the Early Bronze Age) were attributed to Omride building activity based on the biblical passage I Kings 16:23-24, which related Omri purchasing the hill of Samaria and beginning to lay out a royal citadel (Crowfoot *et al.* 1957). In addition, Kenyon argued that the Iron Age pottery of Period V, associated with the assumed Sargonid destruction of Samaria dated to c. 721/20 BC, was typologically earlier than that of Lachish III and Tell Beit Mirsim A2. This conclusion supported Albright's dating of Tell Beit Mirsim A2, but rejected Tufnell's dating of Lachish III. In fact, Kenyon reinstated Starkey's original date of 597 BC for the destruction of Lachish level III (ibid.: 204-206).

Whilst on the one hand providing support for the American school's chronology for Judaean sites of the eighth and seventh centuries BC, Kenyon's dating of the earliest Iron Age pottery at Samaria to the Omride period was met by consternation and confusion by the American scholars. This was because the earliest Iron Age pottery at Samaria was typologically the same as the pottery that the American school had associated with the tenth century BC, and which the Israelis in 1957 were claiming as 'Solomonic' in their work at Hazor (see section 2.9.2 below). In response, two of the Hazor excavators, Y. Aharoni and R. Amiran, rejected Kenyon's 'low chronology' for a 'high chronology' dated to the tenth and ninth centuries BC (Aharoni and Amiran 1958). They claimed that since the earliest pottery in the Samaria citadel area had been recovered from fills underlying the Omride floors (they did not disagree with the historical attribution of the walls), the bulk of this

pottery should pre-date the foundation of the royal capital (ibid.: 179). Aharoni and Amiran suggested instead that the summit had been occupied during the tenth century BC, probably by members of the Shemer family from whom Omri had purchased the hill (ibid.). The Israeli scholars therefore attributed Samaria Pottery Periods I and II to the tenth century BC 'Shemer' occupation, thereby flatly contradicting Kenyon's conclusions.

This disagreement was the beginning of a long-standing division between scholars who adhered to Kenyon's so-called 'low chronology' and Aharoni and Amiran's 'high chronology' (see sections 2.9.2 and 2.10 below). Indeed, even today this division remains the subject of intense debate (see section 2.12). In the meantime however, the immense influence of the excavations at Hazor attested to the rising importance of the Israeli school of archaeology in the 1950s.

2.9 The Development of Israeli Archaeology

2.9.1 Introduction and Background: 1914-1948

Because of the growing Jewish population in Palestine during the British Mandate (1918-1948) and the founding of the Jewish Exploration Society (which later became the Israel Exploration Society) in 1914, many Jewish scholars began to contribute to the archaeological investigation of Palestine (Moorey 1991: 50). Most of the initial research undertaken by the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem from its foundation in 1929, was devoted to sites and monuments important for Jewish history (ibid.). Scholars like N. Avigad, M. Avi-Yonah, I. Ben-Dor, A. Biran, B. Mazar, M. Stekelis, E. Sukenik, and S. Yeivin - the founding fathers of Israeli archaeology - started their careers in the years of the Mandate, but often after academic training abroad in ancient Near Eastern languages, biblical studies, or classics (ibid.: 107; Mazar 1988: 109). Most of these scholars only became involved in archaeological fieldwork in a secondary phase of their careers, and only a few of them were involved in continuous archaeological activity (Mazar 1988: 109). Indeed, the majority of them learnt to excavate by participation or observation on the many European and American projects taking place in Palestine at the time (Moorey 1991: 106).

One of the most prominent of these early scholars was Sukenik. He had participated in the excavations at Samaria with Crowfoot and Kenyon, and had subsequently started his own excavations at Tell el-Jerisheh and 'Afullah (Mazar 1988: 109; see Figure 2). Sukenik went on to found the Institute of Archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, which for many years was the only centre for training archaeologists in Israel (ibid.). European and American scholars

active in Palestine thus played an important role in the formative period of Israeli archaeology. Scholars such as Albright, Petrie, Crowfoot, and Kenyon greatly influenced the development of Israeli archaeology through their relations with the first Jewish scholars, who in turn trained the next generation of Israeli archaeologists. Sukenik's exposure to Crowfoot and Kenyon's methods at Samaria has already been noted, but it was Albright in particular who left his mark on the thinking of a number of Jewish scholars. Indeed, Sukenik was also one of a number of young local scholars who Albright gathered round him to help collect and write about Palestinian folklore (Albright 1922c: 16-17; Silberman 1993c: 10). In addition, Sukenik worked with Albright at Tell Beit Mirsim, along with Mazar, Yeivin, and Glueck (Shanks 1999a: 11; Moorey 1991: 76). These scholars in particular were among the first of a growing number of local scholars to be deeply influenced by Albright's scholarship.

Furthermore, during Albright's time as chairman of Oriental Studies at Johns Hopkins University, he supervised his first PhD (Shanks 1999a: 9). The candidate was A. Biran, who was to become a very influential scholar in Israeli archaeology. After his PhD, Biran became a Thayer Fellow of the ASOR in Jerusalem between 1935 and 1937 where he was encouraged by Albright to undertake his first excavations. Without ever having participated in an excavation before, he organised an expedition to Ras el-Kharrubeh. Biran's comments in a recent interview are very revealing about the way in which young scholars learnt to excavate at that time. He stated that he learnt to excavate by 'trying his hand' at Ras el-Kharrubeh where he 'had a foreman who knew how to run the thing, and that's how you learn' (ibid.: 10). He managed to date the site by relying on the 'expert-opinion' of both Albright and Fisher 'who knew ceramic typology' (ibid.). During his years as Thayer Fellow, Biran also participated in a number of other excavations including those at Tell el-Kheleifeh directed by Glueck and those at Tel Jerishe directed by Sukenik (ibid.).

After 1948 the focus of Jewish scholars on sites important for Jewish history continued. Sites linked to Canaan and Philistia were however also beginning to be investigated, for example 'Afullah and Nahariyah by M. Dothan, and Tell Qasile by Mazar (Mazar 1988: 109). It was not until Y. Yadin's excavations at Hazor however, that Israeli field archaeology focused on a site directly related to Old Testament narratives.

2.9.2 The Excavations at Hazor (1955-1958)

In 1955, Sukenik's son Y. Yadin, began excavations at the site of Hazor in northern Israel (see Figure 2). Yadin had trained at the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, taking courses in Arabic and Hebrew philology, as well as Jewish archaeology and history (Moorey

1991: 107). Through his excavations at Hazor, Yadin's influence on the development of Israeli archaeology was immense. Yadin directed the excavations with the help of some young scholars who were to become some of the most prominent Israeli archaeologists in the years to come: Y. Aharoni, R. Amiran, M. Dothan, and T. Dothan. In addition, the junior staff at Hazor in 1958 became the core of the younger generation of Israeli archaeologists still active today: A. Ben-Tor, Y. Shiloh, A. Eitan, M. Hershkovitz, and A. Mazar (Mazar 1988: 110).

Yadin was unique in his legacy, since he played a prominent role for over a generation in the archaeological, military, and political life in the formative years of the state of Israel. No other Israeli archaeologist at the time was more eloquent internationally in promoting the new nation's cultural heritage, something with which Yadin's research was always pre-occupied (Silberman 1993a). This was as evident in his excavations at Hazor, as it was at his excavations at Masada and the caves of Bar Kochba. Indeed, the site of Masada provides one of the most striking examples of the use of the past in the construction of a national myth, and it is one which its excavator, Yadin, actively participated in (Ben-Yehuda 1995; Zerubavel 1995). The excavations at Hazor represented a combination of Yadin's interests in its fusion of the aspirations of a new nation seeking its roots with the need to train a local school of young archaeologists (Moorey 1991: 108). In addition to his nationalist interests, Yadin's scholarship was marked by a deeply conservative approach to the biblical tradition (ibid.: 107). In this duality, Yadin represented the hallmark of Israeli archaeology as it came to be in later years. Although Yadin may have been exceptional in the extent to which he employed overtly nationalistic rhetoric in reference to archaeological sites, he was by no means a marginal member of the Israeli archaeological community. Quite the contrary, he is often regarded as one of the founding fathers of Israeli archaeology (Silberman 1993a).

Hazor represented a natural choice for Yadin, since it was the fourth great city mentioned in the biblical passage relating Solomon's building activity - I Kings 9:15-20 - and it had not previously been thoroughly excavated. Garstang's brief soundings on the Upper Tell of Hazor in the 1920s had brought to light part of a pillared building which was thought to have been a Solomonic 'stable' (Wightman 1985: 40). The concern therefore, was whether the fourth great city mentioned in the biblical text contained public buildings and fortifications of the Solomonic period. To resolve the matter, Yadin began systematic excavations at Hazor between 1955 and 1958 which revealed a stratigraphic sequence spanning most of the Iron Age (Yadin *et al.* 1958; 1960; 1961; Yadin 1969; 1972).

Excavations at Hazor started at a time when the prevailing conception of Solomonic archaeology had been framed primarily in terms of monumental architecture: casemate walls, six-chambered

gateways, pillared buildings ('stables'), and multi-roomed palaces or residences. When a six-chambered gateway was found in association with a casemate wall in Hazor Stratum X (see Figs. 15 and 16), this conception grew still stronger, although Hazor had yielded no independent dating evidence (Yadin 1972: 136-38; Wightman 1990: 8). Close similarity between this gateway and the one at Megiddo attributed to Solomon prompted the excavators to date it to the tenth century BC. Similarities were also noted between the casemate wall and those at Tell Beit Mirsim and Beth Shemesh that were assigned to the tenth century BC. The conclusion was thus that Stratum X was a fortified city built by Solomon. Various probes beneath the foundations of the casemate wall convinced the excavators that it was the first Iron Age fortification erected at Hazor. Indeed, Stratum X represented the first major architectural phase after the Late Bronze Age destruction layer. It was therefore seen as the only contender for the Solomonic building activity mentioned in the Bible (Yadin 1972: 135; Wightman 1985: 41). Through the discoveries at Hazor the biblical passage I Kings 9:15 became subtly reinterpreted: Solomon did not build a wall only around Jerusalem; he also built walls around Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer (Wightman 1990: 8). This biblical passage was now held to refer specifically to fortifications. Yet I Kings 9:15 gives no indication of the nature of Solomon's buildings at Hazor, Megiddo, or Gezer (ibid.). At the time however, this view was very influential and directed the chronological interpretation of both Hazor and Gezer (ibid.).

In excavating Hazor, Yadin relied heavily on the methodological traditions developed by Fisher and Albright. Buildings, floors and small finds were related to one another architecturally rather than through the observed and recorded details of stratigraphy (Moorey 1991: 108). The published drawings of sections through the mound were reconstructed from the surveyor's plans in a way that reveals nothing of the deposits between the structures. Nor do they show how much attention was paid to separating them during excavation (Yadin *et al.* 1958; 1960). As in Albright's excavations, pottery played a crucial role in establishing temporal relationships between buildings and across the site through the work of the project's ceramicists, R. Amiran and T. Dothan (ibid.).

In the temporary absence of a full published report of the Hazor Stratum X stratification and pottery, Aharoni and Amiran published a brief synthesis of results for the chronology of the Israelite Monarchy in 1958 (see Figure 12c). Aharoni and Amiran adopted the Albright/Wright synthesis for Solomonic Megiddo, but firmly rejected Kenyon's 'low chronology' based on her excavations at Samaria for the tenth-ninth centuries BC, claiming that the field methods used at Samaria had led to mistaken conclusions (Aharoni and Amiran 1958). The prime mover in this revision of Samaria was the desire to maintain the prevailing view of Solomonic architecture and pottery. It is clear that a great deal of inflexibility had already set into the south Levantine Iron Age archaeological

framework (Wightman 1985: 44). Apart from the refutation of Kenyon's 'low chronology' for the tenth-ninth centuries BC, Aharoni and Amiran's article was important for establishing a ceramic chronology for the ninth-eighth centuries BC, which up until then had been poorly understood. The dating of the ceramics was based on the presence of several destruction levels at Hazor which were related to a likely historical context by the excavators, thereby providing a date for each stratum.

The final destruction, that of Stratum V, was attributed to the Assyrian campaign of Tiglath-Pileser III dated to c. 734-33 BC (ibid.). The destruction of the 'Solomonic' defences of Strata X/IX was attributed to the Aramaean wars of the early ninth century BC. Stratum VIII saw the town re-fortified and extended after the destruction. This stratum was ascribed to Omri and/or Ahab, dated to c. 875 BC, and also ended in a destruction level which was attributed to Jehu, dated to c. 840 BC. Stratum VIII was therefore seen to provide a reliable corpus of pottery for the mid-ninth century BC, comparable with Pottery Period III at Samaria and Stratum IVA at Megiddo (ibid.: 177-79). Stratum VII was partially destroyed, an event which the excavators connected to the Aramaean wars with Hazael of Damascus towards the end of the ninth century BC. Stratum VI appeared to have been partially destroyed in an earthquake; this was associated with an earthquake mentioned in the Bible during the reign of Uzziah in Judah. Finally, the destruction of Stratum V was attributed to the Neo-Assyrian campaign of 734 BC (ibid.).

The dating of the stratigraphical sequence at Hazor was thus clearly based on archaeological-historical parallelism. Since there was no independent evidence for any of these inferences, nor indeed any scientific dating evidence, this sequence was largely conjectural. The determination of the chronology was conditioned by the attribution of a Solomonic date to Stratum X; all other dates had to fit to that time frame. The unremarkable remains attributed to Stratum IX, for example, could hardly have been brought down beyond the mid-ninth century BC since this would have unduly stretched them. With this in mind, the association of the refortification with Omri and Ahab fitted in very well (Wightman 1985: 46). Despite the speculative nature of the Hazor chronology, the Aharoni/Amiran synthesis was an immensely influential contribution to Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant. Indeed, their article forms the basis of the currently on-going debate over 'high' and 'low' chronology concerning the south Levantine Iron Age. Furthermore, noting several differences between the pottery of Hazor Strata VIII and VII, they were the first to suggest a division of the 'Middle Iron' period into two phases: Iron II, dated to c. 1000-840 BC, and Iron III, dated to c. 840-587 BC (ibid.: 174-79).

The Aharoni/Amiran synthesis was first assessed in an article by Wright in 1959. In discussing the Samaria chronology, Wright expressed his agreement with Aharoni and Amiran's attribution of

Samaria Pottery Periods I and II to the tenth century BC. He also tentatively supported the division of the Iron Age into Iron II and III, suggesting that this might have taken place during the second half of the ninth century BC (Wright 1959: 26). Also in 1959, Tufnell assessed the newly published first report on the excavations at Hazor in relation to the pottery from Samaria and Lachish. She supported the attribution of Samaria Pottery Periods I and II to the second half of the tenth century BC (or the 'high chronology'), contemporary with Megiddo VA/IVB and Hazor X/IX. For the Iron Age III (Aharoni and Amiran terminology) she maintained a 701 BC destruction date for Lachish III, and followed Aharoni and Amiran in demonstrating that an early sixth century BC destruction of Tell Beit Mirsim A2 was compatible with this dating. Her dating of Lachish II remained the same.

Kenyon had published the pottery from Samaria in 1957 and had thus been unable to consider the new material from Hazor and Megiddo. Taking into account this latest information, Kenyon redressed her position in an article published in 1964. She challenged the Aharoni-Amiran-Wright criticism of her Samaria Pottery Periods I and II chronology, thus restating her earlier position that this pottery dated between c. 880-840 BC. She therefore argued that certain elements of the 'Solomonic' stratum at Megiddo and the strata related to Ahab at Hazor and Megiddo should be down-dated in accordance with her Samaria chronology (Kenyon 1964). Kenyon's 'low' chronology was restated in its definitive form in her book *Royal Cities of the Old Testament* (1971). Again Kenyon stressed the absence of pre-Omride remains at Samaria, and reaffirmed the pottery chronology published in 1957.

2.9.3 Summary

The excavations at Hazor saw the development of a formal division of Iron Age chronology into an early and a late phase, termed Iron Age II and Iron Age III respectively. In addition, the architectural characterisation of the 'Solomonic' period was reinforced by the attribution of the six-chambered gateways and the casemate wall at Hazor to this period. Scholars by this time had become so confident in this conception of the tenth-ninth centuries BC that the entire chronological sequence at Hazor was based around these material markers of a 'Solomonic' date. It also provided the main motivation for Aharoni and Amiran's influential debate with Kenyon over 'high' and 'low' chronology. Chronological sequences at other excavations in the southern Levant were also determined by this prevailing conception of 'Solomonic' material culture, including those at Gezer.

2.10 The Excavations at Gezer (1964-1973, 1984)

Between 1964 and 1973, and again in 1984, an American team from the Hebrew Union College initially lead by Wright, and later by W.G. Dever and H.D. Lance, embarked on large-scale excavations at Gezer (see Figure 2) in the areas left untouched by Macalister (Dever *et al.* 1970; Dever *et al.* 1971; Dever *et al.* 1974). The Hebrew Union College team followed Wright's methods developed at Shechem, and inspired by Yadin's success at Masada, they recruited teams of student diggers to replace local labour. The excavation became an integral part of student training and was to set the trend for future Israeli and American projects (Moorey 1991: 127). In a 1958 article, inspired by his finding of a 'Solomonic' (six-chambered) gateway at Hazor and expecting the same for Gezer on the basis of I Kings 9:15, Yadin had reinterpreted part of what Macalister had described as a 'Maccabean Castle' as a tenth century BC 'Solomonic' gateway (Yadin 1958). Excavations in the area of the 'Maccabean Castle' confirmed Yadin's hypothesis by locating the eastern half of a six-chambered gateway and parts of the attached casemate wall. Pottery recovered from the constructional fills below the gate's foundations and from the earliest floors in the side-chambers led the excavators to date it to the tenth century BC, or in other words contemporary with Beth Shemesh IIa, Tell Beit Mirsim B3, Megiddo VA/IVB, Samaria I/II, and Hazor X/IX (Dever *et al.* 1971: 12-14).

The Iron Age pottery from Gezer was analysed by J. Holladay Jr. His analysis served as a detailed statement of position for the American school, by further clarifying the pottery chronology for the north of Israel during the tenth and ninth centuries BC (Holladay 1966). Since the typological comparison of the pottery left a wide margin for its dating (Dever *et al.* 1974: 63), Holladay's dating of the ceramics was based on the idea that six-chambered gateways were 'Solomonic'. The interpretation of the ceramic and stratigraphical sequence at Gezer was thus again conditioned by the equation between particular architectural forms and King Solomon through the biblical passage I Kings 9:15 (Wightman 1990: 16-17). Indeed, by this time, the south Levantine Iron Age chronological framework had become so fossilised that one leading archaeologist could categorically state that six-chambered gateways constituted a fixed chronological datum for the archaeology of Palestine in the tenth century BC (Aharoni 1972: 302). According to Aharoni this was

> 'one of the rare examples in archaeology where the exact date of a building can be determined even without the discovery of any inscription' (ibid.).

Moreover, while the renewed excavations at Lachish by Ussishkin a few years later uncovered two six-chambered gateways which were both attributed to post-'Solomonic' strata (Ussishkin 1978;

1983), the traditional chronological framework for the tenth and ninth centuries BC remained unchallenged. Certain modifications were proposed, but only within the existing framework. Indeed, Ussishkin proposed a down-dating of the six-chambered gateway at Megiddo to the post-Solomonic period, on the grounds of local stratigraphy rather than general historical considerations (1980). Yet Ussishkin still accepted the tenth century BC date for Megiddo Stratum VA-IVB, Hazor Stratum X, and Gezer Stratum VIII (Ussishkin 1980: 17). As Wightman has pointed out:

> 'That is a telling comment on the inflexibility of the traditional chronology: at one time six-chambered gateways stood as a chronological datum for the tenth century BC; the Megiddo gateway in particular played a fundamental role in the emerging conception of Solomonic archaeology and cultural chronology. In Ussishkin's critique, that gateway can be plucked from its Solomonic niche while the chronological framework it did so much to create remains unchanged. The system has become self perpetuating' (Wightman 1990: 9).

2.10.1 Summary

By the early 1970s, the Gezer excavations had thus consolidated the American and Israeli positions on the 'high' chronology for the Iron Age II (Wightman 1985: 52-53; 1990: 8-9). The excavations at Gezer and Hazor thus resulted in the clarification of the pottery chronology for the ninth and eighth centuries BC. In addition, they provided support for Tufnell's dating of Lachish III to 701 BC and Albright's dating of Tell Beit Mirsim A2 to the seventh and early sixth centuries BC, in other words a 'low' chronology for the Iron Age III (not to be confused with Kenyon's 'low' chronology of the Iron Age II). The only dissenting voice remained Kenyon, who still refuted some aspects of the Iron Age II 'high' chronology on the basis of the Samaria pottery. Gezer thus joined the ranks of Megiddo, Hazor, and Samaria as one of the four main sites on which the Iron Age chronology of Israel became based (Moorey 1991: 164).

After the excavations at Gezer, the formative period in the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology came to a close. All subsequent excavations were interpreted within the chronological and cultural framework created by the excavations at Tell Beit Mirsim, Beth Shemesh, Megiddo, Lachish, Hazor, and Samaria. Although many of the specific conclusions and approaches of Albright, Wright, Kenyon, and Yadin, have been discredited, the framework they helped to create has not yet been reassessed. Indeed, the dominant interpretative framework in use today still conflates historical and archaeological evidence, along with a particular view of ethnicity, to produce a 'history' of ancient Israel. The debates over particular chronological attributions have however continued. Of particular interest to the present study are the debates over Iron Age III chronology in southern Israel.

2.11 Late Iron Age Chronology in Southern Israel: 1969-1987

The revisions in 'Iron III' chronology in the 1950s and 1960s described above were maintained from the 1970s onwards, receiving extra impetus from the excavations by Aharoni at Tel Beersheba (1969-1976), and the renewed excavations at Lachish by Ussishkin (1973-1987), as well as a number of review articles.

Between 1969 and 1976, Aharoni directed excavations at Tel Beersheba in southern Israel (see Figure 2). After Hazor, these excavations produced the second formal statement by the Israeli school on 'Judahite Iron Age III' chronology. A preliminary report on the Iron Age III stratification and pottery was published in 1973. In this report, Aharoni argued that Beersheba Stratum II had been destroyed by Sennacherib, dated to c. 701 BC, because its pottery was very similar to that from Lachish Level III. In doing so, he accepted Tufnell's dating of Lachish III to 701 BC (Aharoni 1973a).

Ussishkin's renewed excavations at Lachish between 1973 and 1987 apparently confirmed Tufnell's dating of Level III, though the excavations have yet to be fully published. Of particular significance was the excavation of a stone-and-earth siege ramp built against the city's double defensive line by the Assyrians (Ussishkin 1983: 137). Excavation of this siege ramp and its attribution to Level III strongly supported the designation of the Level III destruction to the Assyrians in 701 BC through the well-known Assyrian relief showing a siege ramp now in the British Museum which recorded Sennacherib's sack of Lachish (Ussishkin 1982b).

In 1975, T.L. McClellan evaluated the pottery chronology of the Iron Age on the basis of type-frequencies from a selection of stratified deposits. For Iron Age III southern Israel, McClellan strongly supported Tufnell's contention that the ceramic differences between Levels III and II at Lachish were too great to be accommodated within a ten-year interval. However, he did not commit himself on the precise date of Level III (McClellan 1975). Also in 1975, E. Stern contributed to the debate by publishing a brief sketch of comparative stratigraphy for the Iron Age III in southern Israel. Stern accepted the arguments by Kenyon and Albright for the chronology of Tell Beit Mirsim A2, Beth Shemesh IIc, and Lachish III without modification (Stern 1975: Chart 4). Furthermore, he maintained a 'high' date for the destruction of Beersheba II (701 BC), curiously equating it with Level IV at Lachish. The latter result has not been followed by other scholars.

In 1976, four major reviews of Iron Age III chronology in southern Israel were published. Firstly, a formal statement was published by Aharoni (1976) in support of a 'high chronology', through

which the bulk of the Tell Beit Mirsim A2 pottery should be back-dated to the eighth century BC (Aharoni 1976). He based this on the argument that the pottery from this stratum was very similar to that of Lachish III and Beersheba II, as well as the absence of pottery types dated to the early sixth century BC (as for example found at Lachish II, Ramat Rahel V, Arad VI/VII, and Tel Masos). To support the 'high chronology', Aharoni published a selection of vessels characteristic of the eighth century BC and the seventh and early sixth centuries BC respectively, which could be used to differentiate between earlier and later 'Judahite' strata of the Iron III period (ibid.).

In the same year, both Kenyon (1976) and Yadin (1976) published articles that attempted to counter Aharoni's 'high chronology' by focusing on the recently published Beersheba pottery. Kenyon argued, on the basis of a cursory analysis of selected pottery types and their relative frequencies at each site, that Beersheba II had been destroyed later than 701 BC and earlier than the destructions of Lachish III and Tell Beit Mirsim A2 in the early sixth century (Kenyon 1976). However, Kenyon did not attempt to relate the Beersheba II destruction to an historical event within the seventh century BC (ibid.). Yadin on the other hand, suggested that the pottery of Beersheba Stratum II could be placed typologically in between Lachish Levels III and II (Yadin 1976). This was contrary to Kenyon's arguments. Furthermore, he argued that Aharoni's dating of the Beersheba II destruction to 701 BC contradicted the evidence from both the Old Testament and the Arad ostraca, both of which implied to Yadin that Beersheba was occupied at least until the reign of Josiah (ibid.). Yadin therefore suggested that Beersheba II was destroyed during the religious purge of Josiah.

The fourth statement on the Iron Age III chronology of southern Israel to be published in 1976 was by Holladay. He focused on the pottery from Lachish Levels III and II and found very few differences between the two levels. He also noted that the difference between the pottery from Lachish Levels III and II and that from strata of a similar date from sites in the north of Israel was marked (Holladay 1976: 266). At the same time, he accepted Albright's dating of the destruction of Tell Beit Mirsim stratum A2 to the early sixth century BC. His observation of the close similarity between the pottery from Tell Beit Mirsim A2 and Lachish Levels III and II led him to the awkward conclusion that there were no published southern sites with strata dating to the eighth century or first half of the seventh century BC (ibid.: 260, 265). Holladay therefore dated Lachish Levels II and III to the late seventh and early sixth centuries BC.

At the end of the 1970s scholars were still fiercely debating the problem of Iron Age III chronology in southern Israel, unable to reach a consensus on comparative ceramic chronology. This led to a situation where diametrically opposed views were vehemently defended and refuted, though all of them were based on the same body of data. Thus far, no consensus has emerged. Nevertheless,

although the exact chronology of the Iron Age III period was fiercely debated throughout the 1970s, certain pottery types came to be recognised as representing in a general sense a 'late' stage in the Iron Age. Indeed, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, a rapid proliferation of excavations in Israel (Mazar 1988: 112-114) relied heavily on the aforementioned types to date late Iron Age levels. In contrast to the ongoing debates concerning the Iron Age III however, the 'high chronology' of the Iron Age II was accepted as the standard chronology for the tenth and ninth centuries BC until very recently.

2.12 The First Critical Assessments of the Traditional Archaeological Framework for the Iron Age in the Southern Levant: 1990-1996

In 1990, the consensus concerning Iron Age II chronology was questioned for the first time. In an article entitled *The Myth of Solomon*, G.J. Wightman (1990) comprehensively exposed the circular arguments, 'intuitive guesses, and untested assumptions' which he argued lay at the basis of the conception and dating of 'Solomonic archaeology' (Wightman 1990: 5). Wightman's article called for a revision of the stratigraphic sequences of Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. However, while he fundamentally exposed the nature of the foundations of the south Levantine Iron Age archaeological framework, he himself put forward arguments based on similar premises to suggest a 'low' chronology for Iron Age II, based largely on the data from Samaria. Indeed, his arguments were entirely based on the dating of the Samaria building phases according to the biblical passage I Kings 16:23-24, which relates Omri purchasing the hill of Samaria and beginning to lay out a royal citadel. While his article exposes the questionable nature of the framework of Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant, his methods are equally as problematic as those of his predecessors, which he criticises so comprehensively in his study.

In 1996, I. Finkelstein also challenged the accepted view of the eleventh to ninth centuries BC in his article *The Archaeology of the United Monarchy: an Alternative View*. He did this on the basis that

> 'it would be fair to say that the identification of the archaeology of the United Monarchy is far from being a decided matter. Actually, it is a classic case of circular reasoning and dead reckoning. In what follows, I wish to discuss the search for the archaeology of the United Monarchy free of any conventional wisdom, text bias, or irrelevant sentimentality' (Finkelstein 1996: 178).

Furthermore, he argued that there was no safe chronological anchor between the early twelfth century BC (the battles of Ramses III with the Sea Peoples) and the late eighth century BC (the Assyrian campaigns to Palestine) (Finkelstein 1996: 177). Instead, he argued that the most important clues for this time-span were the Philistine Bichrome pottery and the results of the

excavations at Arad and Jezreel (ibid.). On the basis of this, Finkelstein suggested an alternative dating for the main strata of the early Iron Age II.

Like Wightman however, Finkelstein employed the same interpretative framework in his study as that used in the works he criticised. Indeed, to Finkelstein, Arad provided the only firm chronological landmark in the south between the early twelfth and late eighth centuries BC since he accepted the identification by a number of scholars of Tel Arad with the 'Great Arad' mentioned in the Shoshenq list at Karnak (ibid.: 181). Aharoni identified the town which was destroyed by Shoshenq with the first fort at Tel Arad, that of Stratum XI (Aharoni 1981: 5; Herzog *et al.* 1984: 8). However, O. Zimhoni (1985) argued for a close similarity of the pottery from Arad XI to that of Stratum IV at Lachish. Since the Lachish Stratum IV pottery was deemed to post-date the tenth century (ibid.), Zimhoni suggested that the Great Arad of the list should be identified with Stratum XII rather than with Stratum XI (see also Mazar 1986). Finkelstein stated that there was no alternative to this proposal, since Stratum XII represented the first Iron Age occupation at the site after the decline of the Early Bronze Age II city. In addition, he pointed to the conclusions of both Zimhoni (1985) and Mazar (1986) regarding the similarity between the pottery assemblages of Strata X-IX and Stratum VIII, which they suggested should all be dated to the eighth century BC. The dating of Stratum XI to the tenth century BC, Finkelstein argued, would thus create a 'gap' in the Arad sequence in the ninth century BC, and

> '[a]ssigning it to the ninth century would close this unexplained hiatus in occupation. Stratum XII at Arad is therefore the only level in southern Israel, possibly in the entire country, which can safely be dated, on its own merits, to the tenth century' (Finkelstein 1996: 181).

It is clear that Finkelstein relies entirely on traditional methods of archaeological-historical parallelism to date the stratigraphical and ceramic sequence at Arad. In addition, he relies on comparative ceramic analysis with Lachish - itself dated through archaeological-historical parallelism - to date the pottery sequence at Arad.

Finkelstein's arguments concerning Tel Jezreel as a 'safe' chronological anchor are based on a similar approach. Indeed, after pointing to Williamson's (1991) warning that it is inadvisable to draw firm archaeological conclusions from the biblical material on the days of the United Monarchy and Ahab because it is too vague, he writes;

> 'Yet, if the great compound excavated by Ussishkin and Woodhead (1992; 1994) was indeed built by Ahab and destroyed in the course of Jehu's *coup d'etat* (and it seems difficult to understand the compound in any other background), then Jezreel provides an extremely important chronological clue. The pottery assemblage found in the casemates of the compound would then be dated to the mid-ninth century BCE' (Finkelstein 1996: 183).

It is clear that Finkelstein's opinion regarding the site of Tel Jezreel relies on the same simplistic equation between material culture and historical events mentioned in the biblical texts to date the ceramic and stratigraphical sequence at this site. Although Finkelstein exposes to some extent the problematic nature of the prevailing framework for Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant, like Wightman, he falls back on the same archaeological-historical parallelist methods used by all his predecessors to come up with a scenario no less biased and uncertain than those he criticises.

Apart from Finkelstein's and Wightman's work, there have been no further published attempts to reassess the archaeological framework of the Iron Age southern Levant. In addition to the fact that their re-evaluations of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology adhere to the same methods and assumptions as those used in the works they criticise, Finkelstein's and Wightman's studies only focus on reassessing the chronology of a number of key sites in the southern Levant. In other words, their critiques of the current understanding of the Levantine Iron Age do not tackle the problematic nature of the interpretative framework that underpins those understandings. Their attempts to reassign sites and material culture chronologically neglect the fact that it is this framework that has created the problematic structure of the south Levantine Iron Age in the first instance, and that it is this framework that should be the object of their critique. Despite their critiques therefore, the interpretative framework based on the conflation of historical and archaeological sources, along with a particular view of ethnicity, that the early Iron Age archaeologists of the twentieth century helped to create, still remains largely in place today.

2.13 Conclusion

To return to the themes mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the above has discussed the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology from its inception in the late nineteenth century to the present. It has shown how and why certain ideas about the Iron Age in the southern Levant came about, and how they became a fundamental part of south Levantine Iron Age academic discourse. The origins of the methodologies used by the first south Levantine Iron Age archaeologists have also been discussed. This discussion forms a vital part of the present study because although current constructions of the Levantine Iron Age have been recently criticised from a textual perspective by biblical scholars, the archaeological framework that has formed an integral part of these constructions has not been reassessed. This chapter has thus re-evaluated current

interpretations of the Levantine Iron Age from an archaeological perspective by discussing the development of Iron Age archaeology in this area within the wider context of historical, biblical, and archaeological scholarship, as well as the political and religious climate of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The discussion has in particular focused on the elements in the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology which, despite recent critical appraisals, have remained fundamental to current understandings of the Iron Age in this area. These elements include approaches to ethnicity, the relationship between material culture and ethnicity, and approaches to historical sources. The discussion in this chapter has shown that the key ideas concerning the relationship between material culture, historical sources, and ethnicity that underpin current constructions of the Levantine Iron Age, are highly problematic. It is vital therefore that these specific theoretical themes are discussed in detail and reassessed where appropriate. This will be done in chapters 4, 5, and 6, beginning with approaches to historical sources.

Furthermore, by discussing the origins and development of these ideas, it has been shown that in addition to the influence of broad traditions of biblical, historical, and archaeological scholarship, the complex web of inferences and conceptual links made by individual scholars played a key role. Through discussing the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, it has therefore been demonstrated that the predominant views of the Iron Age archaeology of this region are not immutable facts, but rather ideas formed within the framework of particular temporal, socio-political, and intellectual contexts. By showing that ideas that may appear to constitute historical or archaeological 'facts' often change through time and are not necessarily as obvious as they sometimes seem, an essential precursor to the alternative approaches to south Levantine Iron Age archaeology to be presented in this thesis has been provided. By making the ideas and assumptions that underpin current constructions of the Levantine Iron Age explicit, this chapter has also provided an essential precursor to the reassessment of 'Edomite' archaeology. This is because interpretations of so-called 'Edomite' material culture have also been dominated by the interpretative framework that developed in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the next chapter the development of 'Edomite' archaeology will therefore be discussed within the wider framework of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology.

CHAPTER THREE

The Development of 'Edomite' Archaeology

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the development of 'Edomite' archaeology within the wider context of south Levantine Iron Age scholarship described in Chapter 2. The intention is to show how and why certain ideas about 'Edom' and the 'Edomites' came about and how they have remained a fundamental part of academic discourse to this day. It will therefore be demonstrated that the predominant views of 'Edom' and the 'Edomites' are not immutable facts, but rather ideas formed within the framework of a particular temporal, socio-political, and intellectual context. By showing that ideas that may appear to constitute historical or archaeological 'facts' are in fact a means of understanding the past that constitutes a discourse subjected to various political, intellectual, and social trends, the objective of this chapter is to provide an essential precursor to alternative interpretations of 'Edomite' archaeology.

3.2 The Development of 'Edomite' Archaeology in Southern Jordan

It was within the framework of scholarship described in Chapter 2 that archaeological fieldwork in southern Jordan was initiated. The American scholar Nelson Glueck was one of the first to carry out archaeological research in this region in the 1930s, but it was British archaeologists who contributed most to the development of an archaeological framework for Iron Age southern Jordan from the 1960s onwards. The development of 'Edomite' archaeology in this region was thus influenced by both the American and British schools of archaeology (see Chapter 5). In addition, the view of 'Edom' in biblical scholarship strongly influenced the interpretation of Iron Age archaeology in southern Jordan.

3.2.1 The Influence of Biblical Scholarship on the Study of Edom

Apart from short entries in biblical dictionaries and unpublished theses, there have been few attempts at writing a history of Edom from biblical sources. Exceptions are Bartlett (1965; 1972; 1973; 1989; 1992; 1995) and Glazier-McDonald (1995). However, Buhl's monograph *Die Geschichte der Edomiter* (1893) remains the only comprehensive attempt at writing a history of Edom from biblical accounts.

Since Edom - like Israel - is part of the Old Testament narratives, the treatment of its history has progressed along similar lines as that of ancient Israel. Indeed, there has been a tendency to treat Edomite history as an excursus to Israelite history. Accordingly, when speculating on the origin and early history of the Edomites, scholars have depended heavily on prevailing views regarding the origin and early history of the Israelites. For instance, it has been presumed that the Edomites - like the Israelites - entered their respective region from elsewhere and established a unified territorial state along the lines of the Davidic-Solomonic monarchy proposed for the Israelites (Whitelam 1996: 76). This monarchy was then seen to enter into hostile relations with Judah, culminating in the destruction of Judah. This account has remained essentially unchallenged, despite the reformulation of various details (e.g. Bartlett 1989; 1992; 1995; Glazier-McDonald 1995; Knauf 1988; 1992; Knauf-Belleri 1995; Bienkowski 1990; 1992a; Hart 1992).

Through these histories the Edom of the Old Testament came to be identified with southern Jordan (e.g. Buhl 1893). Both sites and material dated to the Iron Age through parallels with the Iron Age material sequence established for Palestine were therefore identified as 'Edomite' from the very inception of archaeological fieldwork in this region.

In addition, these histories produced the notion of a 'Greater Edom', whose kings resided in the interior of a well-defined, national, territorial state. This was because biblical historical scholarship in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was heavily influenced by the 'nation-state model' of German historiography (see Chapter 2). Especially biblical scholars of the German historical school like Alt and Noth, took their framework of interpretation from the secular history of the nation (Sasson 1981: 8-11). Indeed, Alt's guiding principle was that the nation state defined history. As such, the underlying presupposition that the history of the southern Levant had to be understood in terms of national entities was set out in the opening sentences of Alt's seminal study *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion* (1966 [orig. 1930]). Furthermore, Alt's construction of these nation states strongly echoed the ideals of the nineteenth century European nation state in its emphasis on boundaries, common identity, and political organisation led by 'great men'. The context in which Alt wrote was thus a significant factor in determining his conception of the biblical past. The notion of Edom as a nation state can thus be clearly traced back to a particular tradition of biblical scholarship that was heavily influenced by German historiography and its emphasis on nation states.

Since south Levantine Iron Age archaeology was regarded as the physical reflection of biblical history, the Iron Age material culture of southern Jordan was interpreted - following these histories

- as representing a powerful state led by great men. The implicit assumption of Iron Age archaeologists working in southern Jordan was therefore that they were excavating a nation state with fixed borders and national characteristics. Research questions and interpretative strategies thus revolved around the location of political boundaries and the identification of national traits. Clear examples of this are provided by Glueck's interpretation of sites along the 'eastern border' of Edom as border forts (1935; 1936; 1947), the identification of 'Edomite' pottery (Glueck 1935), the interpretation of Qos as Edom's national deity (e.g. Milik 1958; 1960; Vriezen 1965; Oded 1971; see also section 3.2.3.1 below), and the identification of an 'Edomite' script (e.g. Glueck 1940a; 1941; 1971; Naveh 1966; Herr 1978; 1980; Vanderhooft 1995; see also section 3.2.3.2 below). In particular the importance of script, religion, and language was placed in the foreground of discussions about ancient Edom, due to the importance attributed to these characteristics by nineteenth century scholarship in defining nations.

The conception of Edom constructed by biblical studies was thus immensely influential, since it determined both the interpretative framework and the research agenda for Iron Age archaeology in southern Jordan. On the basis of these ideas the Iron Age material culture of southern Jordan was interpreted as representing a nation state with a unified identity and administrative structure. An analysis of the Iron Age material remains of southern Jordan on its own terms however, would not have produced such an interpretation. Indeed, no evidence at all has been found for centralised control and an administrative structure, or indeed a sense of common identity. Instead, the interpretation of the archaeological evidence was determined by a prior understanding of the biblical narratives. The attribution of nation-hood to Edom thus derives far more from nineteenth and early twentieth century European academic expectations, than from anything that can be seen in the data.

Despite this, Iron Age scholarship in southern Jordan has been - and still is - dominated by this concept of Edom. Indeed, the ideas and concerns of biblical scholarship still underpin the present understanding of the Iron Age in southern Jordan. This is clearly illustrated by the recent work of various scholars on 'Edomite' pottery (Mazar 1985; Finkelstein 1992c; Beit-Arieh 1995a; 1995b; 1999), 'Edomite' figurines (Beit-Arieh 1995a; Cohen and Yisrael 1995), 'Edomite' religion (Bartlett 1989; Dearman 1995), 'Edomite' script (Vanderhooft 1995), 'Edomite' nation-hood (Herr 1997; Davieau 1997), and 'Edomite' state formation (Knauf 1992). In order to show in more detail how these ideas about Edom and the Edomites developed and became fundamental to the archaeological scholarship of this area, the work of Glueck will be discussed. As one of the first archaeologists to undertake large-scale archaeological fieldwork in southern Jordan during the time when biblical history was dominated by the concept of the nation state, Glueck's work was

inevitably heavily influenced by these ideas. He was therefore the first to apply many of the ideas current in biblical studies at the time to the interpretation of the Iron Age material culture of southern Jordan.

3.2.2 Nelson Glueck

Prior to Glueck, southern Jordan had been investigated by various explorers (e.g. Burckhardt 1822; Palmer 1871; Musil 1907) as well as by the German scholar Fritz Frank who first surveyed it in 1933 (Frank 1934). It was Glueck, however, who provided the first archaeological synthesis for southern Jordan.

Glueck investigated southern Jordan in 1934 as part of his programme of surveys of Jordan between 1932 and 1934. In total, he recorded some 250 sites (Glueck 1935). Glueck's work differed from that of his predecessors, such as Musil and Frank, in that it made use of recent developments in the study of pottery in Palestine in order to date the occupation of the sites he visited. In the introductory pages to *Explorations in Eastern Palestine I* (1934), Glueck noted that

> 'From the surface finds of pottery or fragments of pottery alone, it is now possible to determine with a considerable degree of accuracy the age to which a particular place belongs, even when all other indications are missing. The new study of pottery has been placed on a scientific basis in recent years by the work of several scholars, particularly Pere H. Vincent and Professor William F. Albright' (Glueck 1934: 3).

On this basis, Glueck classified the sites he explored as Early Bronze Age, Middle Bronze Age, Early Iron Age, Nabataean, and later. In the case of the Iron Age sites, Glueck distinguished between Early Iron I and II, though listing many sites under the inclusive heading EI I-II (ibid.).

In *Explorations in Eastern Palestine II* (1935) Glueck discussed the pottery found during the survey in some detail. This was done under the heading 'Edomite pottery' and encompassed both the Bronze and Iron Age pottery that was found. Glueck noted several characteristics of the Iron Age pottery, in particular its painted decoration in a distinctive style which he termed 'Edomite' (Glueck 1935: 123-37). Glueck was thus the first scholar to refer to the Iron Age ceramics of southern Jordan as 'Edomite'. In addition to the painted Iron Age pottery, Glueck discussed the unpainted storage jars, bowls, cooking pots, and loop-handled jugs, which he related to similar types in central Jordan and Palestine. On the basis of this material, Glueck published a number of extremely influential conclusions. For the Iron Age they may be summarised, in Glueck's words, as follows:

> 'There was a highly developed Edomite civilisation, which flourished especially between the thirteenth and the eighth centuries BC. [...] During their heyday [...] the Edomites could compare favourably with any of their neighbours. Their pottery is well made and artistically and distinctively decorated. They engaged extensively not only in trade and agriculture but also in industry, which included mining and smelting the ores in the 'Arabah. Their boundaries were well protected with a system of border fortresses in sight of each other [...] No records have as yet been discovered, but they certainly will be found if excavations are ever undertaken. The civilisation of Esau was certainly not inferior to that of Jacob. [...] From about the end of EI II in general, but in many sites from about the eighth century on, there is another gap in the history of settled communities in Edom. It lasted until the appearance of the Nabataeans' (ibid.: 138-39).

Following his survey work, Glueck began excavations at Tell el-Kheleifeh (see Figure 1). After a surface survey of the site conducted in 1937, Glueck directed three seasons of excavation at Tell el-Kheleifeh between 1938 and 1940 (Glueck 1938a; 1938b; 1939a; 1939b; 1940a). Accepting Frank's identification of Tell el-Kheleifeh as Solomon's seaport Ezion-geber (Frank 1934: 243-45), Glueck discerned five major periods of occupation which he dated between the tenth and fifth centuries BC. This dating was based on the identification with Ezion-geber which provided the historical and cultural context for the interpretation of Tell el-Kheleifeh's archaeological data (Pratico 1985: 1). In 1967, Glueck published a selection of pottery from Tell el-Kheleifeh Stratum IV, which he identified as the 'Edomite' period of occupation (Glueck 1967: 13). In that level he noticed the appearance of quantities of pottery with painted and plastic decoration which he, again, termed 'Edomite' (ibid.).

The excavations at Tell el-Kheleifeh also produced a number of inscriptions (Glueck 1940b; 1941; 1971). These inscriptions provided the first example of what Glueck interpreted as an 'Edomite' script (Glueck 1940b; 1941). This interpretation was later reinforced by arguments based both on palaeography and the onomasticon. Concerning the palaeography, Naveh isolated distinctive elements of an 'Edomite' script in 1966 (Naveh 1966: 27-30). His conclusions were subsequently accepted in the main by both Glueck (1971) and Herr (1978; 1980). Regarding the onomasticon, the inclusion in one of the inscriptions of the divine name Qaus/Qos was taken as an indication of the 'Edomite' dialect of the inscription (Vanderhooft 1995: 143).

Despite the inevitable revision of Glueck's results due to C.-M. Bennett's later excavations (Bienkowski 1995: 41) and G. Pratico's reassessment of his excavations at Tell el-Kheleifeh (Pratico 1985; 1993), Glueck's ideas were immensely influential on later scholarship. Indeed, through Glueck's work the three criteria that have been commonly used to identify all things 'Edomite' emerged for the first time; the occurence of the theophoric name Qos, the 'Edomite' script, and in particular 'Edomite' pottery. In particular his concept of Edom as a centralised state characterised by fixed boundaries guarded by border posts (Glueck 1935; 1936; 1947) and a common identity reflected in pottery, a national religion, and a national script (Glueck 1934; 1935;

1967; 1971), has prevailed. Due to the huge influence these ideas had on the Iron Age archaeology of southern Jordan, the development of these views in later scholarship will be discussed in more detail.

3.2.3 The 'National' Characteristics of Edom

3.2.3.1 The Theophoric Name Qos

The mention in inscriptions of the theophoric name Qos has been used by many scholars as a national or ethnic marker for the Edomites (e.g. Biran and Cohen 1981; Aharoni 1981; Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985; Beit-Arieh 1995a; 1999; Finkelstein 1992c; 1995; see Figure 17a). This idea is based on the view that Qos represents the national 'Edomite' deity (Bartlett 1977; 1989; Dearman 1995). The claim that Qos is in some way related to Edom originates in the interpretation of a remark made by Flavius Josephus that a god Koze was worshipped by the Idumaeans (Rose 1977: 28). It was only with the accumulating epigraphic finds from southern Jordan with Qos as an element in personal names, however, that the assumed significance of Qos reached the status of a national 'Edomite' deity (e.g. Weippert 1971: 466). This interpretation has been so influential that to this day the occurrence of the name Qos on inscriptions from southern Jordan is regarded as evidence of the national religion of Edom. Indeed, in a recent article Dearman has stated that

> 'these textual references [to Qos, found in Edom] are evidence for a veneration of Qos that can be called Edomite religion' (Dearman 1995: 120).

The initial link made between Qos and Edom based on the mention of Koze and Idumaea in Flavius Josephus' text is highly problematic however, since this text was written several hundred years after the Iron Age. Moreover, the assumption that the Idumaeans and the Edomites represent one and the same people is highly questionable (Bartlett 1998). In addition, the theophoric name Qos has been found in a great many inscriptions from all over the Middle East. The discussions by Milik (1958; 1960), Vriezen (1965), Rose (1977), Bartlett (1978; 1989), Oded (1971), Knauf (1984a; 1984b), Graf (1990), and Klingbeil (1992) preserve the various references to Qos in ancient sources, and attest to the variety of languages and countries in which these references have been found. The late Iron Age population of southern Jordan may well have worshipped Qos, but it is questionable to assume that the Iron Age population of southern Jordan worshipped *only* Qos or that *only* the Iron Age population of southern Jordan worshipped Qos (Bienkowski and Sedman 2001: 11). Furthermore, the whole concept that the veneration of Qos represents a 'national religion' that characterises an 'Edomite' state has to be questioned since it is so clearly based on nineteenth century European notions of what constitutes a nation state. Indeed, even if some form of centrally

organised entity did exist in southern Jordan during the Iron Age, it is highly problematic to assume that it took the same form as modern western nation states. The assumption that such an entity would have been characterised by a 'national religion' is therefore highly questionable.

The idea that Qos represents the national 'Edomite' deity can therefore be questioned at a number of different levels. In addition, the assumed equation between religion and the use of particular names with ethnic or national identity is highly problematic. Ethnic and national identity simply do not work that way (see Chapter 6) and religion and names are practised and used for a great variety of reasons, not just ethnic or national identity. Furthermore, the equation of Qos with 'Edomite' ethnicity is essentially part of a circular argument. The occurrence of Qos in theophoric names on inscriptions in Edom is used to indicate that Qos is venerated in Edom, and the occurrence of the name Qos is then used to indicate specifically 'Edomite' names. These points therefore seriously undermine the use of the mention of the name Qos in inscriptions as an ethnic or national marker.

3.2.3.2 The 'Edomite' Script

The identification of an 'Edomite' script is based on two inscriptions. One was found at Tell el-Kheleifeh by Glueck and the other at Horvat 'Uza in southern Israel. Glueck interpreted all the inscriptions he found at Tell el-Kheleifeh as 'Edomite'. This interpretation was based mainly on provenance, since the majority of the inscriptions were clearly Aramaic or Phoenician (Vanderhooft 1995: 143). One inscription (ostracon 6043 [ostraca are sherds with painted inscriptions]) was written in a distinctive script however (see Figure 18). Naveh isolated the distinctive elements of this script, which he termed 'Edomite' (Naveh 1966). Naveh's interpretation of these elements as 'Edomite' was also based purely on provenance since the inscription had been found in the region commonly identified with the Edom of the Old Testament.

Excavations at Horvat 'Uza (see Figure 1) revealed an ostracon written in a similar script to the one found at Tell el-Kheleifeh (see Figure 19). Based on this, and the fact that the name Qos occurred in the text, the translators classified it as 'Edomite'. Furthermore, they argued that this provided evidence for a national 'Edomite' script marking an 'Edomite' presence in southern Israel (Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985).

Subsequent studies have shown that the script used in these two texts is definitely a distinctive cursive form (Vanderhooft 1995: 157). This does not provide evidence for an independent dialect however, since there is no indication that significant linguistic differences existed between these two inscriptions and those written in the contemporary Hebrew of Cisjordan (ibid.). In addition, the

interpretation of this script as 'Edomite' is problematic since it is based on the appeal to Qos for blessing in the Horvat 'Uza ostracon, the two personal names with the theophoric element Qos in ostracon 6043 from Kheleifeh, and the provenance of the two ostraca (ibid.: 145). Firstly, the mention of the name Qos cannot be taken as an ethnic marker for the reasons discussed above. Secondly, just because an inscription is found in southern Jordan, does not mean that it can automatically be linked to 'Edomite' ethnicity. Objects are present at sites for a great variety of reasons, not just ethnic identity (see Chapter 6). Thirdly, scripts are not related to ethnicity *per sé*, their use can also be geographical (e.g. Arabic), religious (e.g. ancient Hebrew), or decorative (e.g. the Kufic Arabic script) for example. Furthermore, ethnicity is not necessarily marked in such a straightforward manner. Rather, it is something that exists in the mind and that can manifest itself in a great variety of ways, not necessarily in material form (see Chapter 6). The script on the ostraca from Horvat 'Uza and Tell el-Kheleifeh cannot therefore be considered an ethnic marker.

3.2.3.3 'Edomite' Pottery

Glueck was the first to interpret the Iron Age pottery of southern Jordan as 'Edomite'. This identification was based purely on provenance, since Iron Age southern Jordan was commonly identified with the Edom of the Old Testament. In describing this pottery, Glueck discussed both painted (see Figures 20 and 21) and unpainted wares (see Figure 17b).

Subsequent excavations in southern Jordan by Bennett revealed large quantities of Iron Age pottery (see section 3.1.4 below). Based on the ceramics from Bennett's excavations at Buseirah, M. Oakeshott produced the first detailed classification of Iron Age pottery from southern Jordan (Oakeshott 1978). Her classification was based on typological criteria rather than stratigraphy, since stratigraphical evidence was not available at the time of writing. Although Oakeshott's analysis included material from a variety of sites within southern Jordan, her detailed typology was essentially the Buseirah type series (Oakeshott 1978: 28-58). Her classification was generally applicable to other Iron Age sites in southern Jordan however, especially Tawilan which had much the same range of forms as Buseirah (ibid.: 18-19). This was less the case for Umm el-Biyara, where in contrast to Buseirah and Tawilan, very few painted forms had been found (ibid.).

During the 1970s and 1980s, painted sherds similar to the painted Iron Age pottery of southern Jordan were found in southern Israel (see Figure 21). Only a handful of sherds was found at each site, in levels dated to the seventh and sixth centuries BC on local ceramic grounds. This pottery was identified as 'Edomite' in the excavation reports (Beit-Arieh 1969/70; Kochavi 1967; Biran and Cohen 1976; Oren 1975; Kempinski *et al.* 1981; Cohen 1983). It was not until 1985 however, that a

comprehensive discussion of the occurrence of this type of pottery in Israel was published (Mazar 1985). Mazar only discussed the painted Iron Age pottery of southern Jordan in comparison to the sherds found in Israel, since unpainted forms of 'Edomite' pottery were not recognised at sites in Israel until a later date.

It was the excavations at Horvat Qitmit (see Figure 1) by I. Beit-Arieh in the early 1990s that added a new element to the discussion of 'Edomite' pottery in southern Israel. Here, over 900 painted *and* unpainted sherds and vessels similar to the Iron Age pottery of southern Jordan were excavated (Beit-Arieh 1995a). The Horvat Qitmit report was thus important for adding unpainted forms similar to Jordanian Iron Age shapes to the repertoire of so-called 'Edomite' pottery found in southern Israel. Beit-Arieh interpreted the occurrence of this pottery at Horvat Qitmit as evidence for an 'Edomite' presence in southern Israel during the late Iron Age. Following classic culture-history, the appearance of a new pottery type was thus directly linked to the presence of an ethnic group. Like Glueck, Beit-Arieh thus conflated historical and archaeological evidence, along with a particular view of ethnicity, to identify this type of pottery as 'Edomite', thereby perpetuating its status as an ethnic marker.

Bienkowski in particular has argued against this interpretation (e.g. Bienkowski 1992a; 2001a), but most scholars continue to adhere to the equation made between this type of pottery and 'Edomite' ethnicity (e.g. Bartlett 1989; Finkelstein 1992c; Cohen and Yisrael 1995; Herr 1997; Singer-Avitz 1999). Since the 1960s however, this approach has been the subject of an ongoing critique. The New Archaeology movement argued first of all that archaeological remains had to be regarded as the product of a variety of past processes, rather than simply a reflection of ethnicity (e.g. Binford 1962; 1965). Anthropological studies of ethnicity from the 1960s onwards also led scholars to become more aware of the nature of ethnic identity. Archaeologists increasingly realised that rather than being an objective, bounded entity which could be easily described or observed, ethnicity was a self-defining system, something 'of the mind'. In addition, they realised that ethnic identities overlapped rather than existing as discrete, internally homogenous entities characterised by continuity of tradition. Drawing on anthropological and historical examples, it also became clear that the relationship between variation in material culture and the expression of ethnic identity was complex (Ucko 1969; Trigger 1978). Numerous studies found that variation in material culture bore little relation to ethnic divisions (e.g. Hodder 1982a; De Corse 1989). As a result, archaeologists began to emphasise that ethnic groups are rarely a reflection of the sum total of similarities and differences in 'objective' cultural traits. Rather, they are self-conscious/self-defining groups, which are based on the perception of real or assumed cultural difference (Renfrew 1987; Shennan 1989a; 1991; Jones 1997a). Ceramics cannot therefore be regarded as a straightforward reflection of ethnic

identity (the relationship between material culture and ethnicity will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6).

3.2.4 Crystal-M. Bennett

Crystal Bennett conducted the first Iron Age excavations in southern Jordan following Glueck's work at Tell el-Kheleifeh. Working with P. Parr at Petra in 1958, Crystal Bennett became interested in the Iron Age site high on Umm el-Biyara (identified as Iron Age by Glueck's survey in 1933-1934; see Figure 1) which she excavated in 1960, 1963, and 1965 (Moorey 1991: 125). She uncovered a settlement dating to the seventh century BC, which was destroyed by fire. This dating was based on a sealing preserved by the fire of 'Qos-Gabr king of Edom', who was mentioned in the records of the Assyrian kings Esarhaddon (c.680-669 BC) and Ashurbanipal (c.668-627 BC) (ibid.: 399-401; see Figure 17a) (Bennett 1966: 379-83). A seventh century BC date for the site was also indicated by parallels between the pottery and small finds at Umm el-Biyara and Tell Beit Mirsim A, Lachish III, Samaria III, and Tell Jemmeh in Palestine (ibid.: 384-85).

From 1968 to 1970, and again in 1982, Bennett dug at Tawilan (see Figure 1), revealing a large agricultural settlement (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995). Glueck's identification of Tawilan with biblical Teman was one of the main reasons why the site was chosen for excavation (Glueck 1934: 13-14; 1935: 82-83). Phase 1 of Tawilan was initially dated by Bennett to the tenth-ninth centuries BC on the basis of the so-called 'Negev Ware' that was found in some of the earliest pits (Bennett 1984: 4). Glueck had found this type of pottery at Tell el-Kheleifeh and had dated it to the tenth century BC. This was based on his identification of Tell el-Kheleifeh as King Solomon's seaport Ezion-geber, whose reign was traditionally dated to the tenth century BC. 'Negev Ware' is now attested throughout the Iron Age however, as well as in earlier and later periods, and is therefore no longer regarded as chronologically diagnostic (Pratico 1985: 23; Pratico 1993: 35-38). In addition, Pratico's reassessment of the excavations at Tell el-Kheleifeh re-dated the site to the eighth century BC (Pratico 1985: 22; 1993: 49-50). Similarly, the final report on the Tawilan pottery concluded on the basis of typological comparison with Iron Age sites in both Jordan and Israel that occupation at Tawilan probably did not extend back before the seventh century BC (Hart 1995b: 53-56).

As Director of the B.S.A.J. (1970-1978) and then of the newly founded British Institute of Archaeology in Amman (1978-1982), Bennett excavated at Buseirah (see Figure 1) between 1971-1974, and again in 1980 (Moorey 1991: 125). The identification of Buseirah with biblical Bosrah, which was held to have been the Edomite capital at some stage, was one of the main reasons why the site was chosen for excavation (Bienkowski 1990: 101). Buseirah's proximity to the important

ancient mining district of Feinan and the likelihood that Buseirah could provide a good chronological sequence for the history of Edom were also important reasons (ibid.). At Buseirah, excavations revealed a fortified town dominated by two or three large buildings forming an 'Acropolis' or 'Upper Town', as well as ordinary domestic buildings forming a 'Lower Town' on the surrounding terraces (Bennett 1973; 1974; 1975; 1977; 1983). Although Bennett was frequently unclear whether occupation at Buseirah began in the tenth, ninth, or eighth century BC (Bennett 1975: 3; 1983: 11), Oakeshott's subsequent analysis of the pottery indicated a probable date no earlier than the seventh century BC (Oakeshott 1978; 1983).

Apart from Glueck's work at Tell el-Kheleifeh, Bennett's excavations at Umm el-Biyara, Tawilan, and Buseirah form the most extensive excavations to have been conducted on Iron Age sites in southern Jordan. She thus provided the vast majority of material culture to contribute to the emerging conceptions of the Iron Age in southern Jordan at that time. Bennett's interpretative framework was essentially the same as Glueck's since she too believed that southern Jordan in the Iron Age represented a centralised state characterised by national traits. She therefore continued to interpret the Iron Age pottery, architecture, and small finds of this region as material reflections of an 'Edomite' nation state with a common identity and administrative structure. This is clearly demonstrated by her interpretation of Buseirah as Edom's national capital and administrative centre (Bienkowski 1990: 101) and her 'ethnic labelling' of sites and objects (Bennett 1966; 1973; 1974; 1975; 1977; 1983; 1984). Furthermore, on the basis of her work 'Edomite' pottery came to be dated to the seventh century BC and evidence was revealed for continued occupation into the Persian period (Bienkowski 1990: 91-109; 1995: 41). It was largely due to Bennet's work therefore, that Glueck's generally accepted synthesis of Iron Age settlement in southern Jordan had to be revised (although similar discoveries were being made elsewhere in Jordan, see Sauer 1986). Although none of Bennett's excavations were ever published in final form (apart from Tawilan, which was published posthumously in 1995), her work was thus responsible for determining the current archaeological framework of Iron Age southern Jordan, which stresses the lack of stratified Iron Age deposits in this region prior to the end of the eighth century BC (Bienkowski 1995: 41). However, evidence for a good chronological sequence is still lacking (ibid.).

3.2.5 Further Iron Age Excavations in Southern Jordan

Between 1985 and 1986 Stephen Hart undertook excavations at Ghrareh (see Figure 1) revealing a small farmstead (Hart 1988). This project still represents the only substantial excavation of an Iron Age site in southern Jordan to follow Bennett's work. Although a firm date could not be established for the site, a general seventh-sixth century BC date was indicated by the pottery and small finds

(ibid.: 98). Hart also undertook soundings at the small Iron Age sites of Khirbet Ishra and Khirbet al-Megheitah, dating them to the seventh-sixth centuries BC on the basis of the excavated pottery (Hart 1987a; see Figure 1).

Using the pottery from Ghrareh, Khirbet Ishra, and Khirbet al-Megheitah, as well as the ceramic assemblages from Umm el-Biyara, Tawilan, and Buseirah, Hart attempted to determine a relative chronology for the Iron Age sites of southern Jordan (Hart 1989). In doing so, he generally followed Oakeshott's classification of Iron Age pottery from southern Jordan (ibid.: 77-82). While it is possible that Hart's proposed sequence is correct (see conveniently Bienkowski 1995: 51-53), the evidence on which it is based is far from clear, and even Hart agrees that there is considerable overlap in pottery types (Hart 1989: 82). As Bienkowski has noted;

> 'it must therefore be concluded that while we have a workable classification of 'Edomite' pottery, there is not yet sufficient evidence for a proper, defensible sequence' (Bienkowski 1995: 53).

3.2.6 Current Interpretations of Iron Age Southern Jordan

Recent syntheses of Iron Age southern Jordan all agree that there is no evidence for settlement in southern Jordan before the eighth century BC, and that there is little evidence for settled occupation in the Middle and Late Bronze Ages and the Early Iron Age (Bienkowski 1992a: 5-8; 1995: 45-47; 2001a: 264; forthcoming: 266). It is also generally agreed on the basis of Old Testament and Assyrian sources that the kingdom of Edom emerged in southern Jordan during the Iron Age (Weippert 1982; Millard 1992; Knauf 1992; Bienkowski 1992a; 1995; 2001a; forthcoming). Current constructions thus still interpret the Iron Age archaeology of southern Jordan as evidence for an 'Edomite' nation state, although how and why Edom became a state is still debated. The origins of Ammon (traditionally located in northern Jordan), Moab (traditionally located in central Jordan), and Edom (traditionally located in southern Jordan), and generally of Iron Age settlement, are attributed to three causes. Firstly, the collapse of the Late Bronze Age system (McGovern 1987; Knauf 1992: 48). Secondly, the migration of populations into these areas from elsewhere (Knauf 1992: 48-49; van der Steen 1995: 68). And thirdly, the settlement and state formation by pre-existing populations under external stimuli such as the development of Arabian trade, or the effects of the *Pax Assyriaca* (Bienkowski 1992a: 8). Regarding Edom, the copper mines at Faynan are also seen as a possible factor in the renewed settlement of the area and state formation (Bienkowski 1992a: 8; forthcoming: 267).

From the wealth of recent literature on the topic of state formation in Iron Age Jordan it is clear that although some scholars have concurrently argued that rather than representing a nation state, Iron

Age southern Jordan constituted a tribal kingdom (LaBianca *et al.* 1995; Knauf 1992), the idea that these tribes existed within the overall framework of a state is still adhered to (e.g. Knauf 1992; Bienkowski 1992a). Indeed, as a recent article by one of the main proponents of this 'tribal hypothesis' shows, the idea that the archaeology of southern Jordan represents a centralised nation state with a capital and an administrative structure still underpins current constructions of Iron Age southern Jordan (Bienkowski forthcoming: 268):

> 'in Edom, the pottery and architecture at Busayra constitute an exception. This was the capital, and it was impressive: it was meant to be [...]. Compare the completely different pottery assemblage and architecture at Umm al-Biyara in the south [...]: there is little doubt that this was in theory as well as in practice part of the 'kingdom of Edom', because this is where the seal impression of Qos Gabr king of Edom was found [...]. If these were small, isolated settlements, tribally organised and probably with infrequent contact with the central administration, then what we would expect in terms of their material culture would be many local variations, especially in the more common pottery of everyday life, and a lack of the fine ware best known from the capital'

The continued interpretation of Iron Age Jordan in terms of nation states is also clearly demonstrated by the work of some scholars who see these states clearly delineated in the material culture, believing in the existence of distinctive national material cultures characterised by pottery, script, and religion (e.g. Dearman 1995; Vanderhooft 1995; Herr 1997; Daviau 1997). The work of these scholars thus clearly demonstrates the lasting legacy of late nineteenth and early twentieth century biblical and archaeological scholarship with its emphasis on nation states and culture-history.

A number of scholars have, however, begun to express their reservations concerning the interpretation of 'national' material culture groups (e.g. London 1999; Bienkowski 2001a; forthcoming). They base their ideas on the increasing recognition of regional variation in the Iron Age ceramics of southern Jordan (Bienkowski 2001a; forthcoming). This, in addition to the 'tribal hypothesis', has led to the suggestion that the ceramic variation forms clear evidence for the existence of different tribal groupings within the state of 'Edom' (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001; Bienkowski forthcoming). The excerpt from Bienkowski's article above clearly demonstrates this. Despite their explicit arguments against 'national' material cultures, scholars therefore continue to interpret material culture in terms of identity, in this case tribal groupings within the state. The assumption is therefore still that there exists a straightforward link between material culture and ethnicity. An essentially culture-historical framework of research thus still underpins present constructions of Iron Age southern Jordan. The continuity between current interpretations and the early approaches to south Levantine Iron Age archaeology described above and in Chapter 2 is thus clear.

In addition to the view of Iron Age southern Jordan as a nation state, the idea that Assyria ruled directly over the Iron Age states of Jordan has long held sway. This was on the basis that there existed a 'King's Highway' running north-south in Jordan that was part of the Assyrian 'royal road' system (Oded 1970). This assumption has gained a tenacious foothold in the literature concerning Iron Age Jordan. There is, however, no evidence for the existence of such a road in the Iron Age (Bienkowski forthcoming: 269). Furthermore, even if there was such a road, it was not connected to the Assyrian royal road since there is no mention of the 'royal road' (*harran* or *hul sarri*) anywhere west of the Euphrates in the Assyrian sources (Kessler 1997: 131; Bienkowski forthcoming). Southern Jordan may have been some form of tributary entity, paying tribute when required. It was not a province of Assyria however, and was not considered part of Assyria (Millard 1992; Bienkowski 1992a: 3-5; forthcoming).

The only firm evidence for a Mesopotamian presence of some form in southern Jordan during the Iron Age, is the relief at as-Sila' (Sela), near Buseirah (Dalley and Goguel 1997; see Figure 22). This shows a standing king, above him a crescent and a star, and an illegible inscription. Analysis of the style of the relief identifies the figure almost certainly as the Neo-Babylonian king Nabonidus (c.555-529 BC). Dalley and Goguel propose that the relief was carved to commemorate Nabonidus' journey through Edom towards Tayma, perhaps in year 3 or 4 of his reign (i.e. c. 553-552 BC), and suggest that the presence of the relief in as-Sila' implies that Edom was under Babylonian administration at that time (ibid.: 174). Edom also appears in the Nabonidus Chronicle for his third year (c. 553 BC), but the signs are broken and the exact reading is not certain (Beaulieu 1989: 166, 169; Grayson 1975: 105, 282). The following restoration is however usually suggested: 'He/they encamped against the land of Edom' or 'against the city of Edom' (Bienkowski forthcoming: 269). Scholars have understood this as evidence for a siege of Buseirah, Edom's capital, and the annexation of Edom (Bartlett 1989: 157-161; Ahlström 1993: 805). The nature of the relations between Babylonia and Iron Age southern Jordan in terms of either administrative control or even annexation remains purely speculative however, since the evidence from both the Nabonidus stela and the Nabonidus Chronicle is far from clear.

Nevertheless, 20 years ago the standard explanation for the end of the Iron Age in southern Jordan, and therefore the 'kingdom of Edom', was that it was brought to an end by Babylonian aggression (e.g. Bennett 1983: 17). There was little evidence for continued occupation into the Persian period and it was generally concluded that southern Jordan was overrun by nomadic Arab tribes (Eph'al 1984: 198). There was however no evidence at all for these conclusions (Bienkowski forthcoming: 270). Although there is still no conclusive evidence, it now appears increasingly likely that some sites in southern Jordan (e.g. Buseirah, Tawilan, and Tell el-Kheleifeh) continued into the Persian

period (Bienkowski 2001b: 266). Similar to the situation at Tell el-Umeiri located in central Jordan, it now seems that much of the local pottery assemblage continued into the Persian period without diagnostic change (Herr 1995).

The chronology of the late Iron Age and early Persian period in southern Jordan is thus still uncertain. Moreover, there are still questions as to the chronology of Iron Age southern Jordan as a whole, since there are still no published stratigraphically based pottery sequences for this area, nor any associated radiocarbon dates (Bienkowski 2001a; forthcoming). Some radiocarbon dates were however recently published from sites in the Wadi 'Arabah (conveniently summarised in Levy *et al.* 1999: table 2), but since they derive from sites in one particular area, it is problematic to apply them to material sequences from all over southern Jordan. Furthermore, some of the samples taken for dating were associated with charcoal and slag piles, making it difficult to tie them into material culture sequences (Bienkowski 2001a: 263).

Because of this, much of the recent literature concerning Iron Age southern Jordan has addressed chronological and typological topics (e.g. Finkelstein 1992a; 1992b; Bienkowski 1992a; 1995; 2001a; forthcoming; Herr 1997). Other aspects of Iron Age southern Jordan have been discussed largely from the perspective of historical texts and have addressed such issues as the nature and formation of the state of Edom (e.g. Knauf 1992; Bienkowski 1992a), its relations with Assyria and Babylonia (e.g. Bartlett 1989; Millard 1992; Bienkowski 1992a; forthcoming; Ahlström 1993), and its relations with Judah (Bartlett 1989; Edelman 1995b; Glazier-MacDonald 1995; Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001). It is clear that based on archaeological evidence alone, little has been published on anything but typology and chronology. Indeed, discussion of the diet, economy, technology, production and consumption, trading practices, settlement organisation, agricultural and funerary practices of the people who inhabited late Iron Age southern Jordan are lacking (see Chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion of these issues). Iron Age archaeological practice in southern Jordan is thus still closely linked to the traditions of south Levantine Iron Age scholarship described in Chapter 2. A culture-historical framework of research informed by traditional interpretations of the biblical narratives therefore still determines the interpretative framework and the research agenda for Iron Age archaeology in this area.

3.3 The Development of 'Edomite' Archaeology in Southern Israel

3.3.1 The 'Edomite Invasion' of Judah

In the years following Bennett's excavations at Umm el-Biyara, a number of excavations in southern Israel (traditionally identified with 'Judah'; see Figure 1) started to uncover ceramics similar to the Iron Age pottery of southern Jordan. Initially, this pottery was found at Tel 'Ira (Beit-Arieh 1969/70; see Figure 1), Tel Malhata (Kochavi 1967; see Figure 1), and Aroer (Biran and Cohen 1976; see Figure 1). Only five painted sherds were found at Tel 'Ira, only one at Tel Malhata, but at Aroer a slightly larger number of decorated sherds and vessels was found. Only a handful of sherds were therefore initially found at each site, in levels dated to the seventh and sixth centuries BC on local ceramic grounds. In subsequent excavations however, many more sherds were found at Tel 'Ira and Tel Malhata in particular (Beit-Arieh 1999).

Although this pottery was referred to as 'Edomite' in all of these reports, it was only with Y. Aharoni's publication of the ostraca excavated at Tel Arad (see Figure 1) that comprehensive conclusions were drawn from this material (Aharoni 1970; 1981). Arad ostracon 24 was especially significant in this respect (see Figure 23). This inscription was found in an unstratified locus, but was attributed to Stratum VI (dated to the seventh and sixth centuries BC) by its script alone (Aharoni 1970: 16-42). Aharoni translated the inscription as follows:

> 'From Arad 50 and from Kin[ah]...
> And you shall send them to Ramat-Negeb by the hand of
> Malkiyahu the son of Qerab'ur and he shall hand them over
> to Elisha' the son of Yirmiyahu in Ramat-Negeb, lest
> anything should happen to the city. And the word of the king
> is incumbent upon you for your very life! Behold, I have sent
> to warn you today: [Get] the men to Elisha': Lest Edom
> should come there' (Aharoni 1981: 46).

This inscription was interpreted by Aharoni as definite evidence of an 'Edomite' invasion of southern Israel (ibid.: 150). Biblical scholars had already postulated a growing 'Edomite' influence and presence in this area during the seventh and sixth centuries BC. This was based on the Old Testament's portrayal of the hostile relationship between Judah and Edom, which they interpreted as evidence for an 'Edomite' invasion of Judah (e.g. Torrey 1898: 16-20; Alt 1925: 100-116; Noth 1960: 283-84; Glueck 1935: 112-13; 1936: 141-57; Bartlett 1972: 26-37; Bartlett 1989). Arad ostracon 24 was thus considered by many scholars as confirmation of this situation (e.g. Myers 1971: 392; Lindsay 1976; Na'aman 1986). Indeed, it is still cited by most scholars as the main source of evidence for an 'Edomite' presence in southern Israel in the late Iron Age - although

opinions differ over what form that presence took (e.g. Bartlett 1989: 141; 1992: 15; Beit-Arieh 1988: 41; 1995a: 311; 1999: 3; Glazier-MacDonald 1995: 27-28).

Aharoni's invasion hypothesis based on Arad ostracon 24 was therefore determined by a prior reading of the biblical narratives rather than by the analysis of archaeological evidence. Indeed, there is no archaeological evidence for the destruction of Arad at that time, or that the 'Edomites' were responsible, or even that Ramat-Negeb was destroyed. Neither of the two sites proposed for Ramat-Negeb has been excavated, and ostracon 24 does not tell us that it was actually destroyed (Bartlett 1992: 17). In fact, ostracon 24 provides information that is quite vague. Neither the archaeological evidence nor ostracon 24 can therefore provide evidence of an 'Edomite' invasion of southern Israel in the late Iron Age.

In addition to the tenuous nature of the archaeological evidence for Aharoni's invasion hypothesis, the traditional interpretations of the Old Testament's portrayal of Edom's relations with Judah that formed the basis of this hypothesis can be shown to be highly questionable. Indeed, Bartlett has shown that the Old Testament passages often explained by reference to 'Edomite' military action or its results are vague at best and that the interpretations based on them are highly questionable. Indeed, the many wrathful prophecies uttered by various prophets concerning Edom - which scholars often cite as evidence for the enmity between Edom and Judah - do not mention occupation, and the period they reflect is still a matter of controversy (Bartlett 1992: 16-17). As a result, many scholars now argue that the expression of hostility to Edom in the biblical narratives has to be seen as symbolic and that it is connected with a message of salvation for Israel, rather than the threat of invasion (Ackroyd 1968; Simian 1974; Kellerman 1975; Bartlett 1992; Dicou 1994). Aharoni's invasion hypothesis is therefore not supported by either the biblical or the archaeological evidence. Nevertheless, his ideas were immensely influential and determined the interpretation of the 'Edomite' material that was subsequently excavated in Israel.

In the years following the discoveries at Tel Arad, an increasing amount of 'Edomite' pottery was excavated at sites in southern Israel. Two sherds of decorated 'Edomite' pottery were found at Tel Sera' (Oren 1975; see Figure 1), one at Tel Masos (Kempinski *et al.* 1981; see Figure 1), two at Tel Haror (Mazar 1985; see Figure 1), over 900 sherds and vessels at Horvat Qitmit (Beit-Arieh 1995a; see Figure 1), a few sherds at Horvat Radum (Beit-Arieh 1991), large unquantified numbers of sherds at En Haseva (Cohen and Yisrael 1995; see Figure 1) and Kadesh Barnea (Cohen 1983; see Figure 1), and a small number at Tel Beersheba and Arad (Singer-Avitz 1999; see Figure 1). Analysis of the pottery from Horvat 'Uza by the present author also revealed some previously unpublished 'Edomite' pottery.

As the excavator of Tel 'Ira, Tel Malhata, Horvat 'Uza, Horvat Qitmit, and Horvat Radum, Beit-Arieh has become one of leading experts on the 'Edomite' pottery found in Israel. On the basis of his excavations, Beit-Arieh has consistently argued for an invasion of southern Israel by the 'Edomites' in the seventh and sixth centuries BC (Beit-Arieh 1988; 1989; 1995a; 1995b; 1999; Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985; 1991). His arguments are founded on the three main criteria for determining all things 'Edomite' that emerged from Glueck's work at Tell el-Kheleifeh: the presence of 'Edomite' pottery, the god Qos, and the 'Edomite' script. Central to his argument is the site of Horvat Qitmit where large quantities of 'Edomite' pottery were found, as well as two incised inscriptions bearing the name Qos and a large number of unique figurines and vessels interpreted as 'cult vessels' (Beit-Arieh 1995a; see Figures 24-26). These three factors led Beit-Arieh to interpret Horvat Qitmit as an 'Edomite' shrine (ibid.).

While his interpretation of Horvat Qitmit as a shrine on the basis of the huge number of unusual 'cult vessels' that were excavated is debatable, it is the identification of this site as 'Edomite' that is especially problematic. This interpretation is based on the presence of 'Edomite' pottery and the theophoric name Qos. The problems with the use of pottery and the name Qos as ethnic markers have already been discussed. It is clear that neither of these criteria can be used to interpret Horvat Qitmit as an 'Edomite' site. In addition, neutron activation analysis of the 'Edomite' pottery at Qitmit showed that it had been locally produced (Gunneweg and Mommsen 1990). This fact has constituted a source of confusion for Beit-Arieh and other south Levantine Iron Age scholars, since the assumption was that any non-local pottery would have been brought into southern Israel by 'foreign' ethnic groups (Beit-Arieh 1995a). Beit-Arieh therefore interpreted the local production of 'Edomite' pottery in southern Israel as evidence for the presence of an 'Edomite' population in this region.

Despite the view of other scholars that this interpretation is too simplistic (e.g. Bienkowski 2001a), Beit-Arieh interpreted the 'cult vessels' at Horvat Qitmit as 'Edomite' on the basis of his ethnic identification of the pottery and the name Qos. As a result, Horvat Qitmit was interpreted as an 'Edomite' shrine. However, at the time nothing even closely resembling these 'cult vessels' had been found in southern Jordan itself. Furthermore, P. Beck's study of the 'cult vessels' from Horvat Qitmit showed that their stylistic features consisted of a mixture of general ancient Near Eastern and Syro-Palestinian motifs, Phoenician elements, and various decorative traditions found in Jordan (Beck 1995). In addition to the problems inherent in any ethnic interpretation of material culture, these points show that Beit-Arieh's identification of these 'cult vessels' as 'Edomite' is highly problematic.

Recently, 'cult vessels' similar to those found at Horvat Qitmit were discovered in central Jordan by the Wadi eth-Themed Survey directed by M. Daviau (Daviau 1997). Daviau's findings have not yet been published, but their discovery demonstrates that Beit-Arieh's conclusions concerning the 'cult vessels' from Horvat Qitmit may be too simplistic. Indeed, if the 'cult vessels' from the Wadi eth-Themed Survey had been discovered before those at Horvat Qitmit, the vessels at Horvat Qitmit would not have been interpreted as 'Edomite'. Their ethnic interpretation therefore rests solely on their association with 'Edomite' pottery, whose ethnic identification itself is highly questionable.

Before the discoveries by the Wadi eth-Themed Survey, 'cult vessels' similar to those found at Horvat Qitmit were also found at the site of En Haseva in southern Israel (see Figures 27 and 28). More than seventy examples of these so-called 'cult vessels' were discovered in a pit adjacent to the main site (Cohen and Yisrael 1995: 11). The pit was associated with an ephemeral structure that was interpreted as a shrine on the basis of the 'cult vessels'. The interpretation of the 'cult vessels' at En Haseva was strongly influenced by Beit-Arieh's conclusions concerning those found at Horvat Qitmit. Because of the similarity between the En Haseva vessels and those found at Horvat Qitmit, the excavators of En Haseva interpreted the 'cult vessels' as 'Edomite'. Following Beit-Arieh's interpretation of Horvat Qitmit, the structure and the vessels at En Haseva were also interpreted as evidence of an 'Edomite' shrine.

If En Haseva had been excavated before Horvat Qitmit however, the 'cult vessels' at En Haseva would not necessarily have been interpreted as 'Edomite'. Their ethnic interpretation rests solely on their similarity to vessels associated with 'Edomite' pottery at Horvat Qitmit, whose ethnic identification itself is highly questionable. Furthermore, due to its extremely ephemeral nature, the structure with which the 'cult vessels' at En Haseva were associated might not have been interpreted as a shrine. The evidence for an 'Edomite' shrine at En Haseva is thus extremely tenuous, since both the ethnic identification of the vessels and the interpretation of the structure are highly problematic. Large quantities of 'Edomite' pottery were however found at En Haseva, but not in the pit with the 'cult vessels'. On present evidence and with the above points in mind, it is not possible to postulate a connection between the occurrence of these exceptional vessels and 'Edomite' pottery. Indeed, there are many sites with 'Edomite' pottery in southern Israel where such vessels have not been found. Examples of these 'cult vessels' were also found in central Jordan with yet another ceramic tradition. The 'cult' vessels and 'Edomite' pottery may thus in fact be part of two discrete phenomena.

In addition to the findings from Horvat Qitmit and En Haseva, the discovery of an ostracon at Horvat 'Uza (see figure 19) bearing an inscription in a script similar to that of ostracon 6043 from Tell el-Kheleifeh led the excavators of the site to argue for an Edomite presence in late Iron Age southern Israel (Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985). The following reading of the inscription has been suggested:

> '(Thus) said Lumalak: Say to Blbl
> Are you well? I bless you
> by Qos. And now give the food (grain)
> that Ahi'ma/o ...
> And may U[z]iel lift [it] up upon (the altar?)
> [lest] the food become leavened (?)'
> (Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1985: 97)

The excavators of Horvat 'Uza argued that the script of the ostracon and the mention of the God Qos represented evidence of an 'Edomite' presence at the site. Indeed, they argued that since Horvat 'Uza was a fort, the 'Edomite' presence at the site could be explained by the conquering of the fort by 'Edomite' forces (ibid.: 100; 1991: 134). Despite their being no evidence for this attack, they saw their interpretation of the events at Horvat 'Uza as confirmation of Aharoni's view that southern Israel was invaded by the 'Edomites' in the late Iron Age (ibid.). It is clear that the interpretation of the Horvat 'Uza ostracon as evidence for an 'Edomite' presence at Horvat 'Uza is highly tenuous because of the problems associated with the use of a script and the name Qos as ethnic markers. Furthermore, their assumption that Horvat 'Uza was conquered by 'Edomite' forces is based on pure speculation since there is no evidence whatsoever for an attack. Beit-Arieh and Cresson's interpretation of Horvat 'Uza does not therefore constitute evidence to support Aharoni's 'Edomite' invasion hypothesis'.

The way in which 'Edomite' ceramics in southern Israel have been interpreted clearly demonstrates that south Levantine Iron Age archaeology works within a framework of research that conflates historical and archaeological evidence, along with a particular view of ethnicity. This tradition of scholarship has its roots in the practices of the early twentieth century archaeologists described in Chapter 2. This approach has dominated south Levantine Iron Age scholarship throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first century. This in part explains the immense influence that Aharoni's ideas have had concerning an 'Edomite' presence in Iron Age southern Israel, since the tradition of scholarship in which they were first conceived has never really changed. Indeed, although recently a number of scholars have argued against the 'invasion hypothesis' and have suggested alternative interpretations of the 'Edomite' ceramics in southern Israel, their interpretations are still determined by an historical framework and adhere to an equation between material culture and ethnicity.

3.3.2 Alternative Interpretations of 'Edomite' Pottery in Southern Israel

One of the scholars to suggest an alternative interpretation of the relationship between Edom and Judah portrayed in the Old Testament is Bartlett. He has emphasised what he sees as the diplomatic rather than military nature of relations between Edom and Judah (Bartlett 1989: 141-142; 1992: 15). Bartlett still postulates a strong 'Edomite' presence in Judah during the late Iron Age however, based on 'Judah's clear links culturally with sites in Edom' (Bartlett 1989: 143). His basic conclusion is therefore still, that the presence of 'Edomite' pottery, the occurrence of the name Qos, and the use of the 'Edomite' script in southern Israel, indicates an 'Edomite' presence in this area during the late Iron Age. He therefore still relies on the Old Testament and the equation between material evidence and ethnic identity as an interpretative framework for the Iron Age material culture of this region.

Finkelstein has also argued against the idea of 'Edomite' political domination of southern Israel in the late Iron Age, by asserting that Horvat Qitmit was a way-side shrine on one of the main routes of the Arabian trade that connected Arabia via Edom and the Beersheba Valley with Philistia (Finkelstein 1992c: 162). Finkelstein argues that

> 'the intermediaries [for this trade] were the Arab tribes, the inhabitants of the desert and the owners of the camels that carried the commodities over long distances of arid lands. Horvat Qitmit was venerated, perhaps even established, by the local pastoral nomads. [...] The special cultural mélange of Horvat Qitmit represents the culture of the different people who were active on the southern routes' (ibid.).

Finkelstein's argument rests upon circularity however. He argues that the 'cultural mélange' at Horvat Qitmit 'indicates that it was visited by caravaneers of various origins - Arabs, Phoenicians, Judahites, Edomites and others' (ibid.), whilst at the same time using this interpretation as evidence for the desert trade which caused the 'cultural mélange' in the first place. Moreover, following Finkelstein's argument one would expect a wide variety of pottery at Horvat Qitmit representing, as Finkelstein believes, a number of different ethnic identities. There is not however, only that traditionally described as 'Judahite' and 'Edomite' (Beit-Arieh 1995a: 310).

Furthermore, in arguing against 'Edomite' pottery as a criterion for an 'Edomite' invasion of southern Israel, Finkelstein asserts that

> 'we should better see the 'Edomite' pottery as a geographical-cultural occurrence, rather than as an ethnic phenomenon' (ibid.: 157).

He contradicts himself however, by stating that

> 'the 'Edomite' ceramic tradition could be passed with Edomite people who settled in southern Judah, [...] or as a result of a slow cultural expansion' (ibid.)

and that

> 'the cultural mélange [at Horvat Qitmit] indicates that it was visited by caravaneers of various origins - Arabs, Phoenicians, Judahites, Edomites and others' (ibid.).

Despite arguing specifically against 'Edomite' political domination of late Iron Age southern Israel, Finkelstein clearly still believes that the occurrence of 'Edomite' pottery in this region indicates the presence of 'Edomite' ethnic groups.

Like Finkelstein, D.V. Edelman (1995a), B. Glazier-MacDonald (1995), and L. Singer-Avitz (1999) link the presence of 'Edomite' ceramics in southern Israel to economic factors associated with the control of trade routes through the region. Singer-Avitz in particular has highlighted the role of Arabian trade in the spread of 'Edomite' material culture in southern Israel. She uses the finds from Tel Beersheba attributed to different cultures, which she identifies as coming from the west (the southern coast of Israel and Egypt) and the east (Edom, Assyria, and Arabia), to show how Beersheba served as a road-station for the Arabian international trade caravans. On this basis she postulates that as an already flourishing town in the second half of the eighth century BC, Beersheba was situated on one of the main trade routes crossing the Beersheba valley (Singer-Avitz 1999: 55). As Singer-Avitz herself points out however, there is neither written nor archaeological evidence for either the trade with Arabia or the trade routes used at this time (ibid.). Her argument is therefore based purely on her assumption that non-local material represents the presence and movement of peoples from other cultures. This argument is of course circular, since she uses the so-called non-local material evidence to argue for international trade, and the international trade to account for the material attributed to different cultures.

Furthermore, although Singer-Avitz warns against assuming a direct link between material culture and 'the cultural groups which carry it' (ibid.: 54), her entire argument is based on the implicit assumption that a direct relationship exists between material culture variation and ethnic groups. She writes for example that

> 'There is archaeological evidence for interactions between all peoples of the region, with each entity displaying foreign elements from neighbouring cultures' (ibid.: 55).

This assumption also becomes clear from her analysis of the ceramic assemblage from Beersheba. Singer-Avitz describes 'defining their cultural attribution through typological analysis' (ibid.: 13). In other words, she equates different styles of pottery with different groups of people or 'cultures', thereby dividing the pottery into groups with 'Judaean' 'coastal', 'Israelite', 'Edomite', 'Assyrian', and 'Egyptian' characteristics (ibid.: 12). The very basis of her argument for long-distance trade therefore stems from the fact that she equates pottery of different styles with different culture groups, and that those pots must have arrived at Beersheba via those groups, either through direct contact between people or through cultural 'infleunces' (ibid.: 54). Indeed, she even determines the trade route through the Beersheba valley by the presence (or absence) of 'foreign influences' at particular sites (ibid.: 57). Although Singer-Avitz argues for an alternative to 'Edomite' political domination of late Iron Age southern Israel, she still interprets the occurrence of 'Edomite' pottery as an indication of the presence of 'Edomite' ethnic groups.

Despite these problems, the most recent article to present an alternative interpretation of the 'Edomite' pottery in southern Israel has built on Singer-Avitz's emphasis on Arabian trade as a causal factor in the diversity of ceramic styles present in southern Israel. Bienkowski and van der Steen's 'Tribes, Trade, and Towns: A New Framework for the Late Iron Age in Southern Jordan and the Negev' (2001) incorporates recent research on Iron Age Jordan which stresses the tribal nature of the kingdoms which are assumed to have existed at this time on the basis of biblical sources, involvement in Arabian trade, regional variation, and the mixture of pottery traditions at certain sites in an attempt to determine how this situation may also have functioned in southern Jordan and the Negev. On the basis of nineteenth century ethnographic data from the same area, Bienkowski and van der Steen derive a model of how different tribal groups interacted. They base this model on five aspects: territory and movement, trade, interaction with a gateway town, the relationship to central government, and the relationship with an imperial power (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001: 21). They propose that this model can be applied to the late Iron Age in southern Jordan and Israel. As a result, they argue that the kingdom of Edom - which they believe existed in Iron Age southern Jordan based on the biblical sources - was composed of largely independent tribes connected by bonds of allegiance, who interacted with others from Arabia, the Negev (southern Israel), and the west, and controlled the trade between Arabia, Edom, the Beersheba Valley, and Gaza. Furthermore, they argue that certain towns on this route were gathering places for such groups or centres controlling Assyrian interests in the Arabian trade (ibid.).

The stated aim of Bienkowski and van der Steen's paper is to provide an adequate explanation for the complexity of the late Iron Age ceramic assemblages in southern Jordan and Israel. They argue

that previous reconstructions which have simply identified these assemblages as 'Edomite' and 'Judaean' and have interpreted their presence as the result of hostile 'Edomite' incursions into 'Judaean' territory do not account for the complexity of the archaeological record, and that a new explanation is required (ibid.: 40). They therefore argue that the tribal groups of Edom controlled and sometimes raided the trade between Arabia, Edom, the Beersheba Valley, and Gaza. Following Singer-Avitz, they view Beersheba as a gateway town for this trade in the eighth century BC. Similarly, in the seventh century BC they argue that Tell el-Kheleifeh and Tel Malhata may also have functioned as gathering places for such groups, while Horvat Qitmit and En Haseva were local shrines along the trade route. They therefore interpret the variety of pottery styles present at these sites as a result of

> 'The characteristic pottery of these groups [mixing] together at the sites where they mingled' (ibid.: 41).

It is clear therefore that although Bienkowski and van der Steen explicitly argue against the simplistic equation between pottery styles and ethnic groups as a causal factor in the presence of a variety of different pottery styles at sites in southern Israel, they still base their interpretation on an explicit link between material culture and identity. Moreover, the presence of different ceramic styles is still interpreted as a result of population movement, rather than for example trade, function, or patterns of production and consumption. Like their predecessors, Bienkowski and van der Steen thus still fundamentally adhere to a culture-historical understanding of the relationship between material culture and ethnicity, despite their attempt to utilise an alternative model for understanding the patterns of material culture variation in the late Iron Age southern Levant.

3.3.3 Conclusion

The historiography of 'Edomite archaeology' presented in this chapter clearly demonstrates that present interpretations of the late Iron Age material culture of southern Israel and Jordan still rely heavily on the early traditions of biblical and archaeological scholarship described in Chapter 2. Indeed, many of the key ideas that underpin current constructions of the Iron Age in southern Jordan and 'Edomite' archaeology in southern Israel, can be traced back to those early practices. Firstly, these ideas include the view of the Iron Age southern Levant in terms of nation states with administrative structures, 'national' cultures, religions, and scripts. Secondly, these ideas involve an approach to south Levantine Iron Age archaeology that conflates historical and archaeological evidence, along with a particular view of ethnicity. This has resulted in a circular, self-referential framework of interpretation for the archaeology of this area and period. These ideas have combined

to produce largely descriptive, historically-orientated studies of the south Levantine Iron Age which focus on chronology, typology, and historical sources.

In addition to the influence of these broad traditions of scholarship, the present chapter has highlighted the complex web of inferences and conceptual links made by individual scholars that also played a key role in current constructions of 'Edomite archaeology'. The immense influence of specific ideas introduced by Glueck, Aharoni, and Beit-Arieh has illustrated this in particular.

By showing how and why certain ideas about 'Edom' and the 'Edomites' came about and how they have remained a fundamental part of academic discourse to this day, it has been demonstrated that the predominant views of 'Edom' and the 'Edomites' are not necessarily immutable archaeological or historical facts, but rather ideas formed within the framework of a specific temporal, socio-political, and intellectual contexts. In the course of this discussion a number of important theoretical themes that lie at the basis of these ideas have also been highlighted. These themes are the relationship between material culture and ethnicity, the use of historical sources in archaeology, and interpretative and analytical practices in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. These topics will be discussed in detail over the next three chapters since they form such an integral part of current constructions of 'Edomite' archaeology, beginning with the use of historical sources.

SECTION TWO

The Intellectual Foundations of Iron Age Archaeology in Wider Academic Context: Review and Critique

CHAPTER FOUR

Reassessing the Use of Historical Sources in South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology

4.1 Introduction

The historiography of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology in Chapters 2 and 3 has shown that an historical framework has dominated archaeological research in this area. Historical sources were always, and remain, central to interpretations of material culture proposed by Iron Age archaeologists in the southern Levant. Historical sources provide chronological evidence (e.g. '586 BC'), descriptive terminologies (e.g. 'Edomite', 'Israelite', 'Judahite' etc.) as well as explanatory frameworks for late Iron Age archaeology in southern Jordan and Israel (e.g. the Edomites and their 'conquest' of Judah).

The aim of this chapter is therefore to consider the use of historical sources in late Iron Age south Levantine scholarship. This will be done using two complementary approaches. Firstly, on a general and theoretical level, the aim is to highlight how historical sources have commonly been used by archaeologists and historians of this period and to ask whether, in the light of recent 'post-modern' historical approaches, these methods are entirely valid. The second objective of this chapter is to apply these theoretical conclusions to those sources that have most frequently been used to discuss the 'Edomites' in southern Jordan and Israel. As with the archaeological evidence, the aim is to form an opinion of historical sources pertaining to the late Iron Age that is consistent with current theoretical approaches and to avoid perpetuating generalised assumptions that are potentially problematic.

Discussions regarding historical methodology in biblical scholarship have mainly revolved around reconstructing the history of ancient Israel. Therefore, since the biblical traditions concerning Edom have been studied within the same academic framework as those concerning Israel, the focus of the following theoretical discussion will be on studies concerning the history of Israel. The historical sources for Edom and how they have been used will be addressed specifically in the final section of this chapter. In this section they will be brought together with the theoretical ideas and conclusions relating to historical sources in general that are the focus of this chapter.

4.2 Traditional Approaches to Old Testament 'History'

4.2.1 Introduction

The historiography of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology in Chapter 2 demonstrates that an essentially historical interpretative framework has dominated the past two centuries of biblical study and that this interpretative framework long appeared as unquestionably correct. Indeed, a standard designation of modern biblical study is 'the historical-critical method' (Carroll 1997: 87). However, this thoroughly historical hermeneutic itself has had a history; and, more significantly, this hermeneutic, like all others, rests upon a foundation of highly theoretical presuppositions. These presuppositions are based on the shared assumptions of method which lie beneath the hermeneutics of both the German historiographic tradition and the mainstream of biblical criticism since the late eighteenth century (Oden 1980: 135). The specific influence of nineteenth century historicism on biblical studies will be explored in more detail in section 4.2.3, but first the main tenets of the German historiographic tradition will be discussed.

4.2.2 The German Historiographic Tradition

Within the German historiographic tradition, the work of Wilhelm von Humboldt, Leopold von Ranke, and Johann Gustav Droysen was highly influential (Oden 1980: 135). Indeed, Humboldt, Ranke, and Droysen, whose works nearly span the entire nineteenth century, are the acknowledged leaders of German historical thought in that century (Bentley 1997: 36-37; 1999: 419-420). Their students commanded almost all of the academic posts in history in Germany, and many posts in other countries (Oden 1980: 135). The methods of inquiry and understanding advocated by Humboldt, Ranke, and Droysen were not only powerfully influential upon history, but on a number of disciplines, including literary criticism, classical philology, linguistics, and biblical studies (ibid.; Scholtz 1995: 153-154). Their scholarship was characterised by the emphasis on the use of primary sources (contemporary documents, not paraphrases of later sources), on nation states (nations as living organisms with a life cycle of birth, growth, maturity, and death), and above all on the study of origins and development (Oden 1980: 137-138; Bentley 1999: 36-42). In addition, the German school's position on historical knowledge was committed to objectivity. This is clearly illustrated by a celebrated remark made by Ranke in the preface to his *History of the Latin and Teutonic Peoples* (1824) stating that the aim of history was to 'simply describe things as they really were' ('bloss zeigen, wie es eigentlich gewesen').

This positivistic approach to history - where historical sources were seen to provide factual, truthful, and objective information about the past - had been a feature of historical scholarship since the Enlightenment period (Fay 1998: 2). This approach was however not only highly influential on nineteenth century thought. Up to the late 1950s, positivism, broadly conceived - with its claim that reality is directly knowable by means of a single correct method - dominated academia (ibid.).

Approaching history from a positivistic stance meant that historical texts were analysed under the presupposition that they preserved residues of human reality in written form. The aim of history was therefore to establish concrete evidence about the past (ibid.: 1). As a result, historians simply scanned narratives for the few useful facts that would provide the basis for an expanded modern account, while discarding the rest of the narrative as unimportant (Tonkin 1992: 6). Historians thus approached their sources with the assumption that

> 'one engages in such inquiry mainly as a means to the end of discovering what is reliable in the work of this or that Greek or Roman historian, with a view to being able to use it in one's own reconstruction. The study of ancient sources is thus seen to provide the raw material for the modern historian' (Cameron 1989: 1-2).

Historical documents were therefore traditionally

> 'mined for information and [...] had their ore sifted through a fine mesh of criticism, so that their evidence, suitably refined, might take its due place in modern narratives' (Goffart 1988: 15).

In their aim to write factual accounts of the past, historians then used these painstakingly recovered 'facts' as the foundations for wider generalisations about the past on which to base their accounts. Historical texts were thus treated as if they preserved a generalised 'human reality', such that from a few surviving documents the whole society could be revealed (Frantzen 1990: 100). Indeed, as Frantzen has pointed out;

> 'we find Anglo-Saxonists – Renaissance, romantic and modern – seizing a text – a homily by Ælfric, Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* – as a fragment from which the entire civilization of early England can be deduced' (ibid.: 110).

The conception of a past reality that was 'out there' to be found using the right method, led to a notion of progress in historical practice (ibid.: 101-108). With time methods could be improved, the errors and subjectivities of previous scholars could be rectified, and so scholarship would get ever closer to the truth of 'what actually happened'. The idea that current interpretations could be equally, but differently, biased was rarely considered in this approach to history. Nevertheless, like

many other disciplines at the time, these ideas about the past manifested themselves in biblical studies.

4.2.3 Historicism and Biblical Studies

The German school of *Historismus* (historicism), described above, gained entry into a large segment of German theological thinking in the nineteenth century and became the philosophical foundation of the so-called *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule* (history-of-religion school; Oden 1980: 135-137; see also Chapter 2). Concerning the Old Testament, the task this school set itself was to exhibit, through strict application of the principles of historical investigation, the origin and growth of Israel's literature and religion, and to call attention to the social milieu from which it had developed (Hayes and Prussner 1985: 89). From these aims it is clear how closely aligned the history-of-religion school was with the philosophical foundations of the German school of historicism. This is especially clear in its adherence to principles of historical investigation and its focus on growth and origins.

The history-of-religion school radically altered the almost exclusively biblical orientation to the history of Israel current at the time. This orientation was largely due to the immensely influential literary critical work of Julius Wellhausen and his followers. In his *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (1878) Wellhausen had synthesised the results of more than two generations of Old Testament historical-critical scholarship on the sources of the Pentateuch into the 'documentary hypothesis' (Knight 1983). This synthesis concluded that the first six books of the Bible had been formed from a composite of four originally independent documents, dating successively from the early monarchic period to post-exilic times (ibid.; Whybray 1987). Essential to the history of scholarship expressed in Wellhausen's synthesis was that these four discrete sources of the Pentateuch were to be understood as literary documents created at the time of their written composition, and hence as compositions reflecting the understanding and knowledge of their authors and their world. So while the orientation of Wellhausen's work was decidedly towards positive historical reconstruction of a history of Israel's religion, the implications of his work were that nothing historically dependable about earlier periods in Israel's history could be gained from the Pentateuch (Thompson 1992: 2). Despite much criticism and resistance from more conservative scholars, Wellhausen's approach was highly influential and became the dominant critical interpretation of the Pentateuch by the end of the nineteenth century (see also Chapter 2).

It was E. Meyer, as part of the history-of-religions school, who developed the first successful departure from Wellhausen's literary critical approach to the Old Testament in his *Die Israeliten*

und ihre Nachbarstämme (1906; Thompson 1992: 5). By building on both Wellhausen's documentary analysis and his own broad anthropological interests in Arab culture, Meyer created a synthesis with the then known history and geography of the ancient world (Meyer 1884-1902; 1892; 1896; 1897). In arguing against Wellhausen's hypothesis, Meyer saw the traditions from the documentary sources as having originated in oral traditions and collections of narrative that consisted of folktale, legend, and saga (Thompson 1992: 5). In this, Meyer's work was very closely aligned to that of H. Gunkel, who explored the relationship of the Old Testament narratives with what was known of world literature and folklore (Gunkel 1901; Hayes and Prussner 1985: 131-32). From this Gunkel developed his well-known understanding of oral traditions that he argued lay at the foundations of biblical narrative (ibid.). Gunkel's wide-ranging historical interests, and in particular his attempt to understand the history of Israel more in terms of world history and comparative studies than solely in terms of literary criticism, found mature expression in his editorial work and articles in the first and second editions of the immensely influential encyclopaedia *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (1909; 1927).

Without directly challenging the major theses of Wellhausen's documentary hypothesis, the scholars of the history-of-religions school decisively undercut its impact on the issue of the history and origins of Israel. They succeeded in this by arguing that the written documents, from which the narrative traditions of the Bible had been formed, had an oral folk history long antedating their literary composition (Thompson 1992: 8). This undermined the argument that the pentateuchal sources only reflected the understanding and knowledge of their authors and their world, rather than a 'real' biblical past.

It was primarily through the work of orientalists such as H. Gressmann however, that the growing influence of the history-of-religions school was very quickly extended into ancient Near Eastern studies generally (ibid.: 6). Gressmann's *Altorientalische Texte und Altorientalische Bilder zum alten Testament* (1926) extended the comparative approach to the history of Israel to include the entire Near East (Thompson 1992: 6). This radically altered the almost exclusively biblical orientation to the history of Israel of the literary critical followers of Wellhausen. The influence of the great number of newly discovered and translated texts from the ancient Near East at the time, as well as the departure from the narrow theological and predominantly biblical approaches of biblical scholarship, led to new approaches to the history of Israel. Many hoped through archaeological and comparative cultural studies to develop an understanding of the sociological context or 'world' of the Bible as a starting point of biblical studies (ibid.: 7). It is at this point in time that biblical scholarship turned to archaeology as a means with which to study the history of Israel. The use of material culture by biblical scholars to aid in the writing of Israel's history thus began with the work

of Meyer, Gunkel, and Gressmann, and reached its pinnacle in the work of Alt, Noth, Albright, Wright, and Bright. More recently, the influence of this school of thought can still be found in the work of G. Ahlström, N.P. Lemche, V. Fritz, M. Weippert, and E.A. Knauf (ibid.).

There was however a conservative reaction against the history-of-religions school. This was initiated by the work of O. Eissfeldt (ibid.: 8). He used source criticism to debate with Gunkel over the role of the documentary hypothesis in form criticism, as well as over its function in the reconstruction of Israel's earliest history (Eissfeldt 1923; 1963; 1965). Eissfeldt's successful critique of Gunkel's ideas had far-reaching implications. With Eissfeldt, the history of the pentateuchal tradition no longer led back to fragmented and inaccessible folklore. The pentateuchal narratives were now judged to have been in their earliest form tales about historical individuals (Thompson 1992: 8). In other words, folk histories, which, because of their oral transmission, continuously attracted secondary inflations of what was asserted as an original historical account, eventually achieving a resemblance to fictive tales. That is, the Old Testament represented not historicised fiction, but fictionalised history (ibid.: 9). Furthermore, Eissfeldt established the immensely influential doctrine that originating events lay behind the early biblical traditions wherever more than a single variant or account of a tradition was extant in the received text. An original historical event, which was thought to have given rise to such a complex tradition, could be recovered, so Eissfeldt argued, by discounting and removing the later, secondary accretions, until ultimately one discovered the historical nucleus that was hidden in all significant early traditions (ibid.). This led to the assumption that the discovery of the primary or original core of a tradition was a discovery of the historical event itself. In this process, the work of Wellhausen was by-passed, as historical-critical scholarship accepted an essential doctrine of fundamentalism, namely, that in the Bible one discovered history (Long 1987: 10-14).

The assumption that the traditional narratives of the Pentateuch were fictionalised history, and that the originating events of this tradition reflected the history of the ancient Near East, were quickly assimilated by a new generation of scholars. They became the unquestioned presuppositions of nearly all historical scholarship about the Bible (Thompson 1992: 10). The implications of this conservative swing in biblical scholarship were immense. While Eissfeldt's contribution to Old Testament scholarship was in literary criticism, the work and methods of two of his contemporaries strongly influenced the future development of historical studies of the Old Testament. These scholars were W.F. Albright and A. Alt.

Although Albright was more conservative and Alt more liberal than Eissfeldt, both shared his conservative presuppositions that the biblical tradition was generally historical in origin and that the

historical events which lay behind any tradition could theoretically be discovered in the earliest forms of that tradition (ibid.: 11). In addition, Albright and Alt shared a common goal of constructing a history of Israel on the basis of a critical appraisal and synthesis of biblical, archaeological, and ancient Near Eastern studies (ibid.; Hayes and Prussner 1985: 217). Especially for Albright, the biblical narrative provided both an interpretive structure and a framework for the numerous discoveries in the many fields of oriental studies (Dever 1993a: 31).

It is at this point that the link that was established between archaeology and biblical history by Meyer, Gunkel, and Gressmann, became consolidated. Many scholars, following the lead of Albright's quest for extra-biblical evidence for Israel's history, adopted the rapidly developing understanding of archaeology as a means of confirming the historicity of the biblical traditions. Scholars such as N. Glueck, G.E. Wright, J. Bright, and R. de Vaux were representative of this trend. In fact, Albright and his students came close to representing an American 'school' of Old Testament interpretation in the 1950s and 1960s which gave archaeology a very significant role in understanding the Bible (Hayes and Prussner 1985: 217). Indeed, For G. Wright and others biblical studies and biblical archaeology *had* to go hand in hand if an adequate comprehension of the biblical materials was to be achieved (ibid.).

The link between material culture and biblical history that was initiated by nineteenth century biblical studies makes it necessary to discuss theories of history and their relation to the writing of a history of Israel, since archaeology in the southern Levant has been intricately bound up in this relationship from its inception. Indeed, it is this relationship that has played an immensely powerful role in determining both archaeological method and interpretative theory in the southern Levant (see Chapter 5). Especially through the work of Albright and his successors, the idea that the Bible forms a source of history and the view of archaeology as 'the handmaiden of (biblical) history' have been extremely influential. These two themes need to be addressed if the foundations of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology are to be reassessed, since recent historical and archaeological theory have seriously undermined these suppositions. Recent theories of history will therefore be discussed in the next section of this chapter, while the view of archaeology as 'the handmaiden of (biblical) history' will be dealt with in Chapter 5 as part of a general discussion of archaeological methods in the southern Levant.

4.3. Recent Approaches to Historical Theory and Methodology

4.3.1 Introduction

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the positivistic approach to history - with its claim that reality is directly knowable by means of a single correct method - was a feature of historical scholarship from the Enlightenment period up to the late 1950s (Fay 1998: 2). The publication of Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1963) and Hayden White's *Metahistory* (1973) marked a pivotal point in time when thinkers increasingly started to criticise a number of the concepts and distinctions central to positivism, and emphasise the perspectival character of all knowledge (Fay 1998: 2-3). During the last 25 years, scholarly focus has therefore turned to questions regarding the form of discourse by means of which historians describe and explain the past (ibid.).

These developments can be placed into the general academic context of the second half of the twentieth century. During this time, the emergence of interpretivism in the social sciences, 'theory' in literary studies, and generally of deconstructionism and postmodernism in all areas of learning, has come to challenge traditional conceptions of history (ibid.: 2). In other words, the idea that the historian can *understand* the past has come into question. Thinkers such as P. Ricoeur, J. Derrida, M. Foucault, and J.-F. Lyotard, have made the very nature of such an understanding problematic (Gossman 1990: 289). They have attacked and denied the idea of a 'metahistory' which constitutes our horizon for understanding and which brings subject and object, the understander and the understood together (Barstad 1997: 40). Closely associated with these developments in hermeneutics has been the impact of linguistics and literary theory on modern historiography (Iggers 1993). This so-called 'linguistic turn' in academia, as well as the emergence of hermeneutics in many disciplines, has therefore come to emphasise the rhetorical dimension to knowing, the way that forms of discourse deeply affect what is (claimed to be) known (Fay 1998: 2).

4.3.2 Literature and History - Fiction and Fact

Since the rise of scientific history in Germany in the nineteenth century the distinction between fact (= true) and fiction (= not true) - or history and literature - has been the chief mainstay of all history writing. It is this distinction between 'factual' writing and 'fictive' writing that recent literary theory, and 'post-modern' thinking generally, has come to question (e.g. Brannigan 1998; Gossman

1990; Spiegel 1997; Currie 1998). Indeed, the distinction between fact/history and fiction/literature is a relatively recent concept.

Until the eighteenth century the relationship between history and literature was not seen as problematic. History was a branch of literature since 'literature' referred to the practice of writing, and history - along with sermons, eulogies, and letters for example - was one of the forms of writing that could be practised (Gossman 1990: 228). It was not until the meaning of the word literature began to change towards the end of the eighteenth century, that history came to be seen as something distinct from literature (ibid.: 227). The term literature gradually became more associated with poetry, or poetic and figurative writing (ibid.: 229), while reflection on historiography focused more and more on the problems of historical knowledge rather than on the problems with historical writing (ibid.: 230). This was largely due to the needs of nationalism and racial and class struggles in the mid-nineteenth century which led to a need for certainty, a distinction between objective/factual 'history' and creative, expressive 'literature' (ibid.: 153-5).

The distinction that developed between literature/fiction and history/fact has been the particular focus of critique of the new historicist and cultural materialist schools of thought (Brannigan 1998; Currie 1998). These schools of thought share an understanding of texts of all kinds as both products and functional components of social and political formations (Brannigan 1998: 3). In other words, they argue that texts are at once constituted by and constitute history (Spiegel 1997: 16). Indeed, they view texts as occupying

> 'determinate social spaces, both as products of the social world of authors and as textual agents at work in that world, with which they entertain often complex and contestatory relations. In that sense, texts both mirror and generate social realities, which they may sustain, resist, contest, or seek to transform, depending on the case at hand' (ibid.: 24).

Hence, the complex relationship between the author as a conscious decision-making individual and the specific temporal, geographical, socio-political, and intellectual context within which (s)he works must be recognised.

Historical writers are therefore not just mechanical recorders of factual events, they are 'men and women struggling with the contingencies and complexities of their lives' (ibid.: 21). In this way, 'reality' appears to historians in the present only through past texts that are interpretatively reconstituted. History, as the object of our knowledge, is therefore inevitably absent and knowable only through textually mediated representations (ibid.: 27). As such,

> 'we can have no access to a full and authentic past, a lived and material experience, unmediated by the surviving textual traces of the society in question - traces whose survival we cannot assume to be contingent but must rather presume to be at least partially consequent upon complex and subtle social processes of preservation and effacement; and secondly, that those textual traces are themselves subject to subsequent textual mediations when they are construed as 'documents' upon which historians ground their own texts, called 'histories' (Montrose 1989: 20; c.f. Veesser 1989: 37).

Clearly, there is a complex relationship between 'facts' and their creative interpretation (Brannigan 1998: 3). The writing of historical texts, whether by an ancient writer or a modern scholar, is therefore to some degree always a creative process on the part of the writer. Choices have to be made concerning the information to include and what style and structure the work should take. As White has pointed out:

> 'no given set of casually recorded historical events can in itself constitute a story; the most it might offer to the historian are story *elements*. The events are made into a story by the suppression or subordination of certain of them and the highlighting of others, by characterization, motific repetition, variation of tone and point of view, alternative descriptive categories, and the like [...] The important point is that most historical sequences can be emplotted in a number of different ways, so as to provide different interpretations of those events and to endow them with different meanings' (White 1998: 18).

These observations thus move history away from 'realist' assumptions about the meaning of a historical text towards a recognition that history and literature are discourses which construct rather than reflect, invent rather than discover, the past (Currie 1998: 88; Greenblatt 1988: 1-20). History is thus textual, since historical knowledge is based on texts rather than empirical facts. In other words, history carries within it the values and assumptions imposed upon it by narrative exclusion and plot, so that historical knowledge often unwittingly subscribes to those values while assuming some transparent access to the past (Currie 1998: 88).

These ideas have important implications for the present study. Since the historical sources that are used in the reconstruction of south Levantine Iron Age history were written before history became primarily a search for 'facts', those authors may have had a completely different concept of what constituted 'history'. They were therefore not necessarily aiming to record historical facts in a neutral, unbiased and objective manner. Hence, to judge them on those criteria is to judge them in ways that have been important only in the last 200 years. It is therefore no longer possible to simply scan historical narratives for the few useful 'facts' that provide the basis for a generalised modern account, while discarding the rest of the narrative as unimportant, since any such 'facts' are so embedded in the representation, that it directs an interpretation of them (Tonkin 1992: 6).

4.3.3 Text and Context

Not only do these observations undermine the distinction between fact and fiction as the basis for the idea of historical facts; they also undermine these 'realities' as foundations for generalisation. Since ancient authors may not have had history, as we understand it, as the central aim of their writings, it is important that we consider the factors that may actually have shaped their work.

Various people witnessing a certain event may have perceived it in very different ways from the author who recorded it in a historical text. There may have been a wide variety of views across time and space. When examining a historical text it is therefore necessary to consider not only what a text imparts, but also who wrote it and 'why and how a given form of literary work appeared as it did, where it did, and when it did' (White 1973: 99). There may have been a number of reasons that led authors to write in a particular way, in a particular time and place. The temporal, geographical, socio-political, and intellectual *context* of writers thus becomes very important.

Traditional, positivist approaches fail to acknowledge the importance of both text - as created by an individual author - and context (Spiegel 1997: 14). Texts are therefore seen as timeless records of facts rather than the expressions of an individual author in a specific context. However, since all texts are products of conscious decision-making individual authors and the specific temporal, geographical, socio-political, and intellectual context within which they worked, the use of texts as the basis for wider generalisations about the past is undermined. For to do so, is to apply the content of a text outside the context in which it was originally conceived. There is therefore no inherent, all-pervasive 'meaning' in historical texts since '[h]istory as given chronicle or unproblematic 'truth' simply does not exist' (ibid.: 21-22). Instead, once we begin to

> 'regard the past as one aspect of a history of mentalities rather than as a sequence of noteworthy events, one is led to a view of cultural process as many-layered and potentially fissured rather than as progressing steadily according to some smoothly flowing teleological design' (Niles 1997: 202).

Such a view of the past has important implications for the way in which biblical texts are used to construct biblical history, and consequently for archaeological practice in the southern Levant. These ideas have had little impact on biblical studies however.

4.4 The Bible as History?

Despite these important and influential developments in historical theory, many biblical scholars have continued to write so-called histories of ancient Israel (for recent examples of such histories

see conveniently the comprehensive bibliographies in Weippert 1993; Soggin 1993). Indeed, the authors often give the impression that what they are doing is not to present us with their versions of the stories of the Hebrew Bible, but the history of ancient Israel 'as it was' (Barstad 1997: 47). They seem apparently unaware of the fact that there has been a veritable upheaval in the theoretical discussion about the nature of history and the possibilities of history writing in general since the 1970s.[1]

Although a variety of approaches have been put to the task of writing a history of ancient Israel, the resulting histories are little more than the history of Israel as presented in the biblical traditions. In the words of Davies, these histories represent

> 'an essentially midrashic historiography, in which rationalistic glosses are introduced into a paraphrase of the biblical story' (Davies 1991: 14).

During the 1980s however, an increasing unease with the viability of such projects arose. The fracturing of the contexts in which these narratives had been constructed (e.g. Oden 1980; Sasson 1981), along with criticisms of the standard histories (e.g. Davies 1992), helped to expose the extent to which this biblical past had been constructed on the basis of models of contemporary experience (Whitelam 1996: 224). Increasingly, the dominant biblical narrative was fractured as the historical reliability of biblical cosmogony came under fire, first Moses (Coats 1988; Van Seters 1994), then Abraham (Thompson 1974; Van Seters 1975), and finally the Exodus and the conquest of Palestine (Lemche 1985). Not only the question of historical reliability of the biblical sources, but also the issue of historical methodology was increasingly addressed by scholars such as Davies (1992), Thompson (1992), and Lemche (1988).

While these authors have begun to challenge the way biblical scholarship approaches writing history from the Old Testament, there is still strong resistance within biblical studies to such ideas. Historians of ancient Israel can therefore still be regarded as 'theory weak' (Barstad 1997: 46) since the intellectual climate of the last 30 years or so has hardly caught up on biblical studies at all. Indeed, the discipline of 'biblical history' is still primarily concerned with the *outcomes* of history writing rather than with the questions of what historical knowledge is and how we arrive at it (Davies 1995: 110). Biblical historians utilise theories, principles, and techniques of history just like other historians do, but rarely explicitly discuss or acknowledge these (ibid.). This may be partly

[1] There are a few recent exceptions however, including Whitelam's *Recreating the History of Israel* (1986), Younger's *Ancient Conquest Accounts: A Study in Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical History Writing* (1990), Brettler's *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (1995), and Barstad's *History and the Hebrew Bible* (1997).

because most biblical scholars are trained as theologians or philologists, not historians. More important however, may be the fact that ancient Israelite historiography, and biblical studies in general, has been, and still is, more firmly embedded in historicist methods and truth values than many other academic disciplines today (Barstad 1997: 45). The reluctance of biblical historians to discuss theoretical and methodological issues may thus be read as an expression of the idea that knowledge flows from the accumulation of fact ('naïve positivism') and that the structure of the explanation is derived unambiguously from the facts (Driscoll 1988: 163). It is because of such assumptions concerning the existence of a single, ethically neutral, objective interpretation of those 'facts' which constitute 'reality', that discussions concerning historical methods are deemed unnecessary. However, a consideration of historical methodology is imperative since history constitutes a form of social knowledge, always provisional and never final, which is attained by the application of explicit methods and arguments that guarantee and authorise that knowledge.

The fact that biblical scholarship has not yet caught up on the developments in historical theory is amply illustrated by a number of recent publications. While these works discuss methodological issues and emphasise the problems with writing history from the Bible, they are still characterised by a positivistic historical perspective. It is still assumed that 'facts' and historical residues of past reality can be found by assiduous research. Dever for example, writes that

> 'if we do not presuppose that there is some objective reality 'out there', we shall never be moved to investigate and therefore shall learn nothing of what may have transpired. [...] It is our task as historians [...] to penetrate as deeply as possible into past realities, [...] to learn if possible something of 'how it was' (Dever 1997: 306).

Similary, Edelman writes that

> '[a]fter reading texts, the historian must establish what parts of the narrative are reliable evidence and what parts are fictional embellishment and ideological rhetoric' (Edelman 1991a: 22).

In addition, Lemche's understanding of history is fundamentally the same since he states that

> '[s]econd Kings 18-19 is not a historical narrative but a tale about the past that includes, however, an isolated historical residue contained in the narrative' (Lemche 1998: 26).

And:

> 'Historical information may be present in a late text irrespective of how strongly edited this text may have been. It would be ridiculous to say the opposite. However, the criteria necessary for judging whether or not such a late textual witness may provide information must be severe' (Lemche 1998: 24).

Furthermore, scholars such as Thompson and Knauf still assume that history is a science and that one must work with 'hard' facts and evidence. Their understanding of history is thus still profoundly marked by a positivist understanding of what it is to be scientific (Barstad 1997: 51). Indeed, Knauf writes that;

> 'Following the epistemology of K.R. Popper, history can be constructed as objectively and as scientifically as any other area of human knowledge' (Knauf 1991: 32).

Similarly, Thompson writes that;

> 'History happens, and our knowledge of it is based on evidence' (Thompson 1992: 388).

Even the *Annales* school of history, which scholars such as Whitelam, Weippert, Knauf, Lemche, and Thompson have recently turned to as an alternative for writing the history of Israel, belongs to the school of traditional German historiography, which relies on empirical data - *sources* - with which to reconstruct the past (Barstad 1997: 50). The assumption that texts provide 'facts' about the past thus remains unquestioned even in these most recent approaches to writing the history of Israel.

Although approaches to biblical history have thus changed from those used in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, biblical historical scholarship is still characterised by a lingering positivism. This is despite recent 'post-modern' developments in historical thought which have thoroughly undermined the positivist approach to history. It is therefore essential that the standard histories of Israel and Edom that have been written based on this approach are reassessed.

4.5 The Historical Sources for Edom and Their Interpretation

4.5.1 Introduction

In this section the intention is not to discuss in detail the specific references to 'Edom' in historical sources. Rather, the aim is to discuss these sources and how they have been used by south Levantine Iron Age scholars in light of the theoretical issues raised above. A brief summary of the written sources for Edom, and how they have been traditionally interpreted, is therefore provided.

4.5.2 Summary of the Sources

There are three main historical sources for 'Edom' that have been used to provide an outline of its 'history'. These include Egyptian texts, Assyrian texts, and the Old Testament (for recent discussions of each of these see Bienkowski 1992b; Edelman 1995b; Bartlett 1989). The Egyptian texts first of all have been used as historical sources for the Middle Bronze, Late Bronze and early Iron Age of southern Jordan (Kitchen 1992). The Assyrian texts have been used as sources for the eighth and seventh century BC (Millard 1992), and lastly, the Old Testament has formed the main historical source for ancient Edom (Bartlett 1989; 1992; 1995).

The earliest textual source for southern Jordan in the Middle Bronze Age is Egyptian (Kitchen 1992). 'Kushu' occurs in the story of Sinuhe (c.1900 BC) and in the Brussels Execration Texts (c.1800 BC) (Kitchen 1992: 21). An archaic biblical allusion is generally admitted to indicate the probable location of this name - Hab. 3:7 sets Kushu in parallel with Midian (ibid.). Therefore, Kushu is generally taken to be south of Shutu (in later Moab), in what became Edom, between eventual Moab and Midian (ibid.). In the Late Bronze Age there is a possible Tuthmosis III itinerary from the Yarmuk River down to Kerak (Redford 1982). However, its interpretation remains uncertain (ibid.: 25). The first explicit references to Edom do not appear until the eighth year of Merenptah however, c.1206 BC (Bienkowski 1992a: 3). Papyrus Anastasi VI (lines 51-61) contains the following report:

> 'We have finished with allowing the Shasu clansfolk of Edom to pass the fort of Merenptah that is in Succoth ['Tjeku'], to the pools (brkt) of Pi-Atum of Merenptah that (is/are) in Succoth, to keep them alive and to keep alive their livestock, by the will of Pharaoh, LPH, the good Sun of Egypt, along with the names from the other days on which the fort of Merenptah that is in Succoth was passed [by such people...]' (text, Gardiner 1937: 76-7; translation, Caminos 1954: 293; c.f. Kitchen 1992: 27).

The next reference to 'Edom' comes from the reign of Ramesses III (c.1184-1153 BC). The following passage appears in Papyrus Harris I (76: 9-11):

> 'I destroyed the Seirites, the clans of the Shasu, I pillaged their tents [using the West Semitic term *'ohel*], with their people, their property, and their livestock likewise, without limit...' (text, Erichsen 1933: 93; translation, Grdseloff 1947: 87-88; c.f. Kitchen 1992: 27).

Turning now to the Assyrian sources, Edom is first mentioned in Assyrian inscriptions in 796 BC as a tributary on the Nimrud slab of Adadnirari III. Here a list of subjugated regions includes Tyre, Sidon, Israel (Bit Humri), Edom and Philistia (Millard 1992: 35). Uncertainty remains about the date of Adadnirari's triumph, as 805 BC has also been suggested (Hawkins 1982: 400). However, 796 BC is generally deemed to be preferable (Millard 1992: 35). The text is a summary rather than

a comprehensive account of a campaign, and does not mention any of the other entities in the region such as Judah, Moab and Ammon (ibid.). The next reference to Edom appears in a list of tributary kings from Tiglathpileser's reign (c.745 BC), naming Qaus-malak of Edom (ibid.: 36). A clay tablet from c. 742 BC again reports tribute from Edom (ibid.). Later, probably between 720 and 715 BC, Nimrud Letter XVI reports the arrival of envoys from the west in Nimrud bringing tribute. Edom is named among them (ibid.). Possibly of the same approximate date is a list of wine allocations from Nimrud that notes men from Edom (ibid.). Edom also occurs in Sargon's prism inscription which tells of the rebellion of Yamani of Ashdod. Yamani sought support from his neighbours in Philistia, Judah, Edom, and Moab. Sargon names these entities as tributaries to him (ibid.). Edom is thereafter mentioned in texts as bowing down to Sennacherib's campaign (701 BC), Esharhaddon's campaign (673 BC) and Ashurbanipal's campaign (667 BC) respectively (ibid.). Finally, Edom is mentioned in one other Assyrian text, a list of place-names which offers no other information (ibid.).

Lastly, the most extensive written source for Edom is the Old Testament. Edom already appears as a distinct entity in the Old Testament accounts of the Israelite Conquest (Bienkowski 1992a: 1). Gen. 36 contains a succession list of kings 'who reigned in the land of Edom, before any king reigned over the Israelites', together with a group of seven other lists containing names of tribes, chiefs, and places attributed to Edom (Bartlett 1989: 83). Num. 20.14-21 tells how Edom refused to give the Israelites passage through their territory, forcing the Israelites to turn away, a story which Deut. 2.1-8 presents differently, implying that the Israelites travelled through the Edomite territory, and that the Edomites were afraid of them (ibid.). Biblical scholarship has generally viewed these accounts of the Israelite passage from Egypt to Canaan as fairly difficult to interpret, regarding the reigns of Saul and David as more secure starting points for a 'history of Edom' (ibid.: 101-102; Weippert 1982).

The Old Testament imparts that during David's reign, David conquered Edom and garrisoned it:

> 'David made a name for himself when he returned from smiting Edom in the Valley of Salt, eighteen thousand men. And he put garrisons in Edom; throughout all Edom he put garrisons, and all the Edomites became David's servants' (2 Sam. 8:13-14; c.f. Bartlett 1989: 105).

Little more is mentioned in the Old Testament concerning Edom, until 2 Kgs 8.20 tells of the establishment of the kingdom of Edom following Edom's revolt during the reign of Jehoram of Judah:

> 'Edom revolted from the rule of Judah, and set up a king of their own' (2 Kgs 8.20; c.f. Bartlett 1989: 117).

The Old Testament then goes on to portray the later developments in the history of Edom in a particular light. Edom - more than any of the other states such as Moab and Ammon for example - is the object of hate (Haller 1925; Mailland 1956; Cresson 1972). Edom is consistently regarded as a fierce enemy, and later as a particularly treacherous enemy (Bartlett 1989: 175). Various scholars have stressed the 'symbolic status' that Edom acquires in the prophetic writings (e.g. Simian 1974; Kellerman 1975; Dicou 1994). Simian, for example, has pointed out that none of the oracles against Edom in Ezekiel 6, 35, and 36 can be looked upon as a straight oracle against Israel's neighbour (Simian 1974: 290-324). Often, the oracle is connected with a message of salvation for Israel. 'Edom' therefore represents a symbolic name for Israel's enemies, whose defeat is the triumph of Israel (ibid.). Simian therefore concludes that

> '[e]dom müsste also in der prophetischen Literatur vor allem als ein theologischer Begriff betrachtet werden' (Simian 1974: 323; c.f. Dicou 1994: 14).

Edom also appears in the book of Genesis (Gen. 25-36). At first sight, these texts concerning Edom are quite different from those in the prophetic books, as there is no such negative estimation of Edom as in the prophecies. Dicou argues, however, that the two sets of texts are related to each other despite the appearance of the opposite. He argues that they have the same theological background. In Genesis, just as in the prophetic books, Edom represents the nations and serves as Israel's opponent (Dicou 1994: 16).

4.5.3 Discussion of the Sources

Since Edom - like Israel - is part of the Old Testament narratives, the treatment of its history has progressed along similar lines as that of ancient Israel. The resulting histories have therefore been little more than the history of Edom as presented in the biblical traditions. The early history of Edom is envisioned to have enfolded in essentially parallel fashion to that of ancient Israel. For instance, ancient Edom - like ancient Israel - was also seen to enter its respective region from elsewhere and establish a unified territorial state along the lines of the Davidic-Solomonic monarchy proposed for the Israelites. This monarchy was then seen to enter into hostile relations with Judah, culminating in the destruction of Judah. This account has remained essentially unchallenged, despite the reformulation of various details (e.g. Bartlett 1989; 1992; 1995; Glazier-McDonald 1995; Knauf 1988; 1992; 1995; Bienkowski 1990; 1992a; Hart 1992). There have been questions as to the nature of ancient Edom, the manner in which it related to Judah, but for biblical studies there has been no question that this was 'what actually happened'. In the words of Barstad, these histories of ancient Edom 'represent nothing more than various forms of a retelling of the

biblical stories, diluted with sparse, desultory analytical remarks, not seldom with disparate references to 'archaeology' (Barstad 1997: 47).

Since the Old Testament forms the main historical source for Edom, and the Egyptian and Assyrian sources only mention 'Edom' briefly by name without much additional information, the Egyptian and Assyrian texts have been seen essentially as extra-biblical sources which supplement the accounts of Edom in the Old Testament. The only reason these references to Edom in the Egyptian and Assyrian texts have been singled out is because they have been assumed to refer to the *same entity* as the Old Testament. Treatments of these written sources have therefore all assumed that the Edom that is referred to is one and the same thing in all three sources: the Edom of the Old Testament. As a result, these historical texts have all been used to reconstruct the history of 'biblical Edom'.

However, the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Old Testament texts cover a very wide time-span. They were written in vastly different time periods, in some cases separated by hundreds of years. The assumption that they all refer to one and the same thing must therefore be questioned. In addition, since all texts are products of a particular author in a particular context, ancient texts were written for a variety of reasons, not necessarily with the aim of recording 'facts' in a neutral and objective manner. Historians of today cannot therefore extract the 'facts' they need for their modern accounts, whilst discarding the rest of the text as fiction. Moreover, ancient texts cannot be used as the foundation for wider generalisations about the past, since documents were produced for different reasons and from different points of view. The Edom in the Old Testament is thus a 'biblical Edom', a creation based on a particular view formed in a particular context. This point may be emphasised by the particular way in which 'Edom' is portrayed in the Old Testament, discussed above.

The Edom in the biblical narratives is thus an idea, not a thing. By calling ancient Edom an idea, it is not intended to deny its power and importance or to assert that the events described in the Old Testament are necessarily invented. Quite the reverse; the biblical narrative generally has presented an immensely important and powerful idea that has formed a crucial part of the material and spiritual experience of western society for centuries, underpinning national institutions or experiences as real as migration and wars. The power of ideas, their 'reality', should therefore never be underestimated. Furthermore, it is not asserting that what is described in the Old Testament is invented. What it is denying is the view that the 'ancient Edom' of the Old Testament is *the* ancient Edom, an Edom that can be located in the southern Levant during the Iron Age. This is to conflate two separate things. The Old Testament refers to an ancient Edom that it perceives, its view of

whatever was 'out there' for it to interpret in such a way, it is an idea, a point of view, an interpretation. The people living their daily lives in the southern Levant throughout the Iron Age cannot simply be equated with this view, for they are not one and the same thing. In the words of Davies referring to ancient Israel:

> 'This [the Old Testament] is *a* history of *an* Israel; surely not a history Judaean peasants might have told, or a merchant from Jaffa, or a priest of a local sanctuary, or a foreign mercenary, or a pragmatic royal political adviser, or any number of religious intermediaries. This history is one of innumerable possibilities, but the one that came down to us. The idea that we can filter its points of view, its ideology, throw away the 'story' and keep the 'facts' is risible. There is no *objective* history of Israel any more than there is an objective 'ancient Israel'. [...] The story written by an ancient elite (or elites) cannot pre-empt our own attempts to reconstruct our own stories of the past, neither because it just happened to be the best preserved, nor because it is Scripture' (Davies 1997: 111).

4.5.4 Conclusion

The discussion above has clearly demonstrated that there is an agenda in the Old Testament regarding the way that Edom is described and used in the narrative. Edom serves a particular purpose in the Old Testament texts. We do not know who, or how many people wrote the Old Testament, when they wrote it, where they wrote it, and for what purpose. It is clear however, that the narrative in its dealings with Edom is influenced by a specific temporal, geographical, intellectual, social, and political context. Regarding the references to Edom, these contextual conclusions undermine the value of this text for a reconstruction of Edom's history. Using the Old Testament as the basis for generalisations on the history of Edom outside this context should therefore be avoided.

For the same reasons, it cannot be assumed that the Assyrian and Egyptian texts refer to one and the same thing as the Old Testament. These three sources cannot be conflated into a single history of Edom. Furthermore, the issues raised above mean that we cannot mine the Assyrian and Egyptian texts for historical information about Edom, or indeed other subjects. These historical texts were also produced for particular reasons, by particular people, in particular contexts and are therefore not simply straightforward sources of 'facts' about the past.

So where do these conclusions leave the biblical historian? As Nicholas Howe (1989: 2) has pointed out, historical sources are 'deeply eloquent' precisely because of their cultural biases; they can reveal something of the world views and personal experience of individuals, and perhaps the communities in which they lived, in the past. By highlighting the temporal, geographical and intellectual contexts of those authors an attempt can be made to understand how and why a

particular source appeared where and when it did in the form it did - even if the supposed 'reality' of their situation remains forever obscure. In some cases this may undermine the long-established 'facts' of history and the validity of wider generalisations, but it is an approach which respects the integrity of historical sources and their authors.

To summarise, the conclusion that it is not possible to write a single, 'factual', and 'truthful' history of Edom based on historical sources has important implications for archaeology. Since such histories have formed the main interpretative framework for Iron Age archaeology in southern Jordan, and indeed south Levantine Iron Age archaeology as a whole, current archaeological practices in this region have to be reassessed. To do so, it is essential that the relationship between biblical history and south Levantine archaeological methods is investigated. This relationship will be addressed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Practice of Iron Age Archaeology in the Southern Levant: Excavation, Analysis, Interpretation, and Publication

5.1 Introduction

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 have shown that Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant has from its inception been central to the writing of the history of Israel from the Bible. This relationship has had an immense effect on the way in which archaeological sites in the southern Levant have been - and still are - excavated, recorded, interpreted, analysed and published. The aim of this chapter is therefore to discuss past and present approaches to historical texts and material culture, and to show to what extent these approaches have shaped the interpretative universe and research agenda of Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant.

One of the first archaeologists to address methodological issues in south Levantine archaeology was W.G. Dever. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Dever wrote a series of programmatic essays advocating change from the traditional 'biblical' archaeology to a more secular and professional 'Syro-Palestinian' archaeology (Dever 1972; 1974; 1976; 1977; 1980a; 1980b; 1981). In these essays he outlined the rationale for these developments as the 'New Archaeology'. He wanted Syro-Palestinian archaeology to move 'away from the 'classificatory-historical' or descriptive phase with its particularistic and ideographic preoccupation, toward the 'explanatory' phase with its nomothetic orientation and its deductive reasoning' (Dever 1981: 15).

It is interesting to note that before Dever's articles, hardly any theoretical work had been produced in south Levantine archaeology. Nowhere in the literature could there be found a general definition of archaeology, much less a coherent body of archaeological theory. Albright and Wright, for example, approached the subject only vaguely in their last works, and then only in connection with their concern to define 'biblical archaeology' (Albright 1969; Wright 1969). This is in sharp contrast to American anthropological archaeology, which at that time was generating an enormous published body of theoretical work (Willey and Sabloff 1974).

This may be attributable to the fact that until the 1970s, none of the American excavators working in the southern Levant were primarily archaeologists. Albright's overriding concern for example, was the Bible in its ancient Near Eastern setting (Moorey 1991: 67). Archaeology was simply a new

and promising 'tool' for biblical studies. Indeed, virtually none of Albright's enormous written corpus betrays any awareness of trends in general archaeology. As Dever has pointed out, Albright never conceived of south Levantine archaeology as a separate discipline or branch of general archaeology and he never articulated a design for its professional relation to Americanist archaeology (Dever 1981: 24). Due to Albright's immense authority, his pragmatic approach strongly influenced many of his students and protegés up to the early 1980s. Their approaches thus remained fixated on Albright's views from the 1930s and 1940s, while archaeology in America and Europe developed rapidly with the processual and post-processual movements (ibid.).

Dever was one of the first to address this situation in the late 1970s. In his writings, he advocated changes based on assumptions borrowed from American anthropology and archaeology at that time. These changes included a more multi-disciplinary orientation, a broader consideration of environmental factors, recognition of the value of ethnographic parallels, the employment of general systems-theory, use of quantitative methods, and positivism (Dever 1981: 15-16). However, although some of these approaches were adopted by projects from the mid-1970s, there was little discussion of them in the literature (ibid.). Moreover, there was little appreciation or critical application of these ideas to stratified tells. Furthermore, these new ideas were ignored by more traditional American excavators, by many European historical archaeologists, and significantly by Israeli archaeologists (ibid.). The result was that a great number of these techniques (e.g. multi-disciplinary approaches) were simply tacked on to existing methods. A real adoption of processual theory, quantification, and the application of scientific analyses was not evident anywhere in the literature, and overall interpretation and analysis still followed traditional historical-descriptive theory.

This situation has remained the same to the present. Indeed, the reports on the recent excavations at Tel Masos (Fritz and Kempinski 1983), Tel 'Ira (Beit-Arieh 1999), and Megiddo (Finkelstein *et al.* 2000a) for example, show that although analyses of for instance faunal and botanical remains, as well as small finds are included, the results of these analyses are not incorporated into any of the conclusions. These still remain based on culture-historical considerations. Furthermore, while some new techniques were finally being adopted by south Levantine Iron Age archaeologists in the late 1970s and early 1980s, archaeologists in Europe and America had already moved on to post-processual archaeology and were approaching archaeological data in yet more new ways. The ideas encompassed by the post-processual movement have been adopted by south Levantine Iron Age archaeology to an even lesser extent than processual approaches however.

Apart from Dever's attempts to bring south Levantine Iron Age archaeology into line with current archaeological theory and methodology, and despite a few recent articles that express frustration with current approaches (e.g. Dever 1981; Wightman 1990; Finkelstein 1996; 1998), a reappraisal of the methods used in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology has not yet been undertaken. Reanalysis and reinterpretation of data is advocated, but no attempt is made to address the way in which this should happen. Therefore, every reinterpretation is based on the same methods of analysis and interpretation (see Chapter 2). Since research agendas are also determined by this interpretative universe, the questions that are asked of archaeological material remain the same and interpretations remain static. Indeed, the fact that a few of the new techniques advocated by the New Archaeology were tacked onto old, unchanging methods, is a case in point. If change is desired, it is necessary to explore the basis of current archaeological practices in order to determine where potential problems lie.

The aim of this section is therefore to discuss past approaches to historical texts and material culture in a critical manner, and to show the extent to which these approaches have shaped south Levantine Iron Age archaeology's research agenda and interpretative realm. In doing so, the main objective is to form an opinion of archaeological methods pertaining to the late Iron Age that is consistent with current theoretical approaches and to avoid perpetuating generalised assumptions that are potentially problematic. This will be done in three ways. Firstly, the interpretative universe of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology will be explored and the implications of such practices for fieldwork highlighted. Secondly, the development of excavation methods in the southern Levant will be discussed and the influence of those methods on material culture interpretation and analysis. Thirdly, methods of material culture analysis and site publication will be discussed.

5.2 Archaeological Interpretation in South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology

5.2.1 The Relationship Between History and Archaeology

To investigate the basis of the interpretative approaches used in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, the development of archaeology as an academic discipline in the nineteenth century must be explored. Archaeology developed alongside history, since at the beginning of the nineteenth century history was created in opposition to, and with the mutual exclusion of, the object-centred archaeology established at the same time (Andrén 1998: 120; see also Chapter 2). However, the study of the past at that time was heavily influenced by the interests of the German school of historiography, discussed in Chapter 4. Historical studies therefore focused mainly on

political history and centred on great events, ideas, and personalities (Burke 1991: 2). Archaeological research into the past was thus heavily influenced by these ideas. Furthermore, archaeological research was at that time generally conducted by scholars trained as historians. This meant that material culture was seen principally as a means to flesh out, illustrate or extend political historical narratives (Halsall 1997: 818). It was in this climate of historical research that biblical studies turned to archaeology in its aim to write the history of Israel by attempting to link sites into a particular political-historical narrative (ibid.: 807; Andrén 1998).

Because of this specific employment of material evidence, the use of archaeology by historians fell into three categories. The first was illustrative, where archaeological data was used to provide illustrations of the appearance of people, or settlements and daily life. The second was justificatory. Usually crude and off-the-shelf use was made of archaeology to 'prove' history. For example, documents attest the existence of x and here it is, proved by excavations at y. Thirdly, the idea of 'filling in the gaps'. Where documents do not tell us anything about a given problem, it is valid to use archaeology to probe these areas (Halsall 1997: 819). This gave rise to what Morris has called the 'zero-sum' view of archaeology, that the importance of archaeology is inversely proportional to the number of written documents (Morris 1992; c.f. Halsall 1997: 819). As was shown in Chapter 2, these interpretative approaches were common practice in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology throughout most of the twentieth century.

From the beginning of the twentieth century, however, the discipline of archaeology in Europe began to develop an increasing body of theory of its own regarding the interpretation of material culture. A variety of different theoretical and methodological approaches developed over the course of the century in the guise of culture history and processual and post-processual archaeology (see Trigger 1989; also Chapter 6). In addition, a whole variety of investigative techniques were devised to establish dates, diet, economy, environment, trade, technology, and so on. Furthermore, the relationship between history and archaeology also developed. In Europe, especially medieval history and archaeology addressed the use of texts and archaeology (Funari 1999). In North America historical archaeology tackled the same issues (Beaudry 1988; Deetz 1988; Leone and Potter 1988; Little 1992). This dialogue continues and the relationship between archaeology and history has become increasingly theorised (Funari *et al.* 1999).

In contrast, the approach to the history and Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant has remained relatively unchanged since the early twentieth century. As was mentioned above, there has been some development in excavation methodology (see section 5.3 below), and some new investigative techniques have been applied (see section 5.4 below). Interpretative techniques

however, remain very much based on late nineteenth and early twentieth century ideas regarding the role of archaeology *vis à vis* history. Indeed, in their pursuit of biblical history, south Levantine Iron Age archaeologists still conform to the three uses of archaeology in historical studies that were described above: illustration, justification, and 'filling-in-the-gaps'.

5.2.2 Illustrating, Justifying, and 'Filling-in-the-Gaps' in the Iron Age Southern Levant

Abundant examples in recent literature demonstrate that the interpretative approach to the Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant remains essentially unchanged from early twentieth century practices. Ahlström for example states that

> '[a]rchaeology does not only illustrate or correct textual witnesses. Artifacts and building remains can often inform us about phenomena not mentioned in any text, thus giving a quite different picture than that commonly painted by text alone' (Ahlström 1991: 121).

This statement clearly demonstrates both the 'illustrative' and 'filling-in-the-gaps' approaches described. Similarly, Edelman views archaeological evidence as essentially illustrative. Indeed, she states that

> '[t]he archaeologist must now employ historical methodology, or defer to a historian able to do so, immersing himself or herself fully in the evidence, linking it through creative reason, *and fleshing out the resulting pattern with appropriate details*' (Edelman 1991a: 23; emphasis added).

Although the interpretative problems with the work of early archaeologists in the southern Levant have been made explicit (Thompson 1974; 1992; Miller and Hayes 1977; Whitelam 1996; see also Chapters 2, 3, and 4), the extent to which these methods of interpretation have continued in use largely unchanged in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology has not been addressed. Although these statements represent but two examples, such views are commonly expressed in Iron Age archaeological literature (e.g. Ussishkin 1982a; Lance 1982; Dever 1982; Sauer 1982; Miller 1982; 1987; Rainey 1982; Meyers 1984). In addition, it must be emphasised that these quotes are from textual scholars. This was done on purpose, since it illustrates that archaeology is still practised to a great extent by textual scholars, whose main training and interests lie with biblical scholarship. This clearly illustrates that archaeology is still very much regarded as an addendum to biblical studies, rather than a subject in its own right with its own methods.

Archaeological research on the south Levantine Iron Age has thus been carried out overwhelmingly by biblical scholars or scholars trained in philology. They and their students have been trained and/or based in seminaries or departments of Near Eastern languages or archaeology, quite separate

from departments of general archaeology or anthropology. Many scholars working on the south Levantine Iron Age have therefore been isolated from current developments in archaeology, anthropology, and history generally. As a result, archaeological excavation (see section 5.3) and archaeological interpretation are still undertaken in a similar way to when they were first introduced to elucidate the history of ancient Israel (see Chapter 4).

Furthermore, the illustrative, justifying, and 'filling-in-the-gaps' view of material culture has engendered a specific perspective on archaeological evidence. This perspective has determined to a great extent the interpretative methods employed in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology.

5.2.3 Texts as an Interpretative Framework

The use of archaeology as illustration, justification, or 'filling-in-the-gaps', demonstrates how scholars working on the south Levantine Iron Age perceive material culture. Material evidence is deemed to be essentially uninformative, and to derive its meaning only through an association with written texts. It is therefore assumed that material culture can only be interpreted through an historical framework. This perspective is clearly illustrated by the following recent statements by Miller;

> 'artifacts are silent and remain anonymous unless interpreted in the light of written records' (Miller 1991: 96).

And:

> 'non-written, artifactual evidence [...] is silent by nature [and] is not particularly useful for dealing with specific historical questions' (Miller 1987: 62).

Similarly, Ahlström has written that

> '[a]rchaeological remains [...] are 'mute' so their dating and their interpretation will be problematic without accompanying written material' (Ahlström 1991: 117).

As a result of this view, material culture is classified, dated, and interpreted in a straight 'totalising transfer mode' (Carroll 1997: 97). In discussing Avigad's treatment of clay bullae, Carroll provides a good example of this approach in addition to its problems (ibid.). In identifying the name *Berekhyahu Ben Neriyahu* with *Baruch ben Neriah*, Jeremiah's scribe and companion, Avigad reads into the name on the bulla the whole story of Jeremiah and Baruch as found in the biblical book of Jeremiah (Avigad 1986; c.f. Carroll 1997: 97). Furthermore, Avigad contends that;

> 'among this new group of Hebrew bullae there are two items which serve to provide for the entire assemblage with a dating more precise than that which would derive from a normal stratigraphical context, *for these bullae bear the names of personages known to us from the Bible*' (Avigad 1986: 9; c.f. Carroll 1997: 98, emphasis added).

In response, Carroll points out that;

> 'Avigad is dating the archaeological finds from the biblical text and then using the finds to confirm and illuminate the text. This is, of course, an all too typical example...of circular argumentation... The dating of the production of the book of Jeremiah is not a fixed historical fact. On the contrary it is an open question. So when bullae are 'found' which include, among many other names, the names of figures to be found in the book of Jeremiah, that 'finding' may not have any significance at all for such dating purposes. [...] But Avigad already *knows* that the book of Jeremiah is straight history and therefore that it provides him with a cross-reference for dating *with certainty*... I find that to be an illegitimate use of texts and archaeological 'finds' as well as being an unacknowledged theory-laden approach to both. [...] Dating finds from the Bible without any obvious connections between the Bible or the 'finds' strikes me as being an ideological activity much more than it is a historical activity. What are the warrants and assumptions involved in such activities?' (Carroll 1997: 98).

The assumptions that Carroll refers to occur in many other works. They can also be found in Israel Finkelstein's work *The Archaeology of the Israelite Settlement* (1988). The word 'settlement' already reflects a reading of the Bible rather than the archaeological remains available for interpretation. In addition, the designation of that settlement as 'Israelite' further shows a reading of the Bible rather than material culture. How does Finkelstein know that this material culture is 'Israelite'? Material culture does not cry out its ethnic affiliation. Moreover, in identifying the early Iron Age remains he discusses with the 'Israelite Settlement', Finkelstein reads into this material culture the whole story of Israel's entry into Canaan as found in the biblical narratives. In doing so, he clearly illustrates Carroll's straight 'totalising transfer mode'.

These assumptions are also inherent to the dating of many sites in the southern Levant. As was shown in Chapter 2, in many cases dating has been based on biblical-archaeological parallelism, which relies on the identification of destruction levels with historically attested military conflicts. Examples of this procedure are the campaign of Pharaoh Sheshank I to Palestine which has regularly been used to date particular destruction levels, as well as the campaigns of the Assyrian and Babylonian armies. These conflicts may well have happened, but the problem lies with the association of so-called destruction layers with these specific military campaigns. Firstly, it is difficult to bring together various isolated pieces of 'destruction' from excavation areas into a unified 'destruction level'. Indeed, it is very hard to assess the nature and extent of the burning, and in many cases even more difficult to establish sound stratigraphic connections between isolated burnt patches. Furthermore, rarely does destruction debris yield evidence for its cause, particularly

when it is encountered in small and isolated soundings. Causes for destruction may have involved accidental localised fires or buildings being razed to make way for new buildings. Hence, in most cases there is no evidence to identify a so-called destruction layer with a particular military campaign. Again, these interpretations reflect an assumed link between historical texts and archaeological remains. What are the connections between the biblical narratives and these finds however?

These are but a few well-known examples, but they serve to emphasise that much classification, interpretation and dating of material culture is based on the direct link that is made between pieces of archaeological data and any piece of biblical - or other historical - narrative which is deemed suitable for the find because of some perceived similarity. In the case of Avigad's bulla, what is the historical connection between the person named on the bulla and the book of Jeremiah? The same question can be asked of Finkelstein's associations, as well as the association of particular military campaigns with so-called 'destruction layers'. The interpretative shifts that are made in these assumptions require warrants that are not produced.

In response to this question, some scholars would argue that Sheshank, for example, did destroy many cities because evidence of his campaign has been found all over Palestine in destruction layers 'independently dated' to that period. The same can be said for Finkelstein's work, where the Israelite settlement described in the Bible is proved for many scholars by his discovery of 'Israelite Settlements' in the hill country. These are of course circular arguments. They do not therefore provide adequate arguments to justify the associations in question.

5.2.4 Summary

The approaches to interpretation that have been discussed above indicate that south Levantine Iron Age archaeology is still interpreted within a textual framework where material culture is fitted into an existing historical narrative. This has resulted in the development of serious problems with material culture change and periodisation - as was highlighted in Chapter 2. Current interpretations are thus problematic.

In addition to the problems with the interpretative approaches themselves, the methods of interpretation used in the southern Levant have greatly influenced the way in which sites are excavated, recorded, and interpreted. Similarly, they have influenced the way in which excavated material evidence is studied. Indeed, the conflation of Old Testament 'history' with the Iron Age material culture of the southern Levant has determined to a great extent the nature and extent of

analyses carried out on the material evidence recovered through excavation. This has had an immense influence on the knowledge (or lack of it) we have of the lives of Iron Age people in the southern Levant based on their material culture. The reasons for this development, as well as its implications, will therefore be discussed in section 5.4.

First however, the methods of excavating and recording archaeological sites in the southern Levant will be discussed. This is crucial, since excavated material culture forms the backbone of any archaeological research. The way in which material evidence is retrieved greatly affects the analyses that can be undertaken using that data. As will become clear in the following section, current methods of excavation in the southern Levant produce data that is only useful within the current interpretative universe of south Levantine Iron Age scholarship. For many current analytical and theoretical approaches in archaeology generally, the material excavated in the southern Levant is practically impossible to use. The material culture is excavated and recorded in such a way, that alternative interpretations are rendered impossible. For south Levantine Iron Age archaeology not to remain static, it is necessary to take a closer look at why this is the case. In doing so, the main objective is to form an opinion of archaeological methods pertaining to the late Iron Age that is consistent with current theoretical approaches and to avoid perpetuating generalised assumptions that are potentially problematic.

5.3 Excavation and Recording Methods in South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology

5.3.1 Introduction

By viewing material culture as the physical manifestation of the historical events described in textual sources, archaeologists in the southern Levant developed a particular view of the make-up of an archaeological site. Tells were envisaged as the resulting build-up of material from successive cities built on top of one another. As such, it was thought that tells were formed by horizontal layers - or levels - which represented successive settlements through time. Because objects such as pottery and small finds were linked to ethnic groups, which were in turn linked to the cities known from historical sources, the occurrence of a particular style of material was seen to indicate a particular level. For instance, if two trenches were dug at either side of a tell and the same type of material culture was found in them, they would be interpreted as being from the same level or city and thus of the same date. In addition, it would be assumed that they were on the same horizontal plane within the site. Petrie and Bliss' excavations at Tell el-Hesi provide good examples of this (see Chapter 2), in addition to Guy's definition of the stratum at the Megiddo excavations:

> 'Stratum – a more or less horizontal layer of the site belonging to a particular period' (Guy 1938: 5).

The following discussion will demonstrate that methods of excavation have changed since Petrie's time, but that many of the ideas behind them have not. Indeed, it will be shown that inherent within the locus-to-stratum method (which is still the main excavation and recording method used by both American and Israeli Iron Age scholars) is the idea that an archaeological site is made up of a series of horizontal 'strata' (or levels) that can be neatly determined on the basis of pottery typology. Each change in material culture heralds the change from one chronological period to another, and in some cases from one ethnic group to another. Indeed, the fact that loci (contexts) are still linked together in Israeli archaeology through a combination of artefact typology and the levels taken of those loci during excavation (Liora Freud [Tel Aviv University] and Tali Erickson-Gini [Southern Regional Inspector of the Negev for the Israel Antiquities Authority] pers. comm.), indicates that it is still assumed that a tell is formed by a series of horizontal layers representing successive cities. All material culture of the same type and at the same height is joined into a stratum. Material culture contexts are not joined by stratigraphical or depositional relationships, but by an assumption that all loci at the same level within a site belong to the same time period; a view that has changed little since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

This view of archaeological sites is highly idealised however. It is a view that is heavily determined by an historical perspective. In historical sources, event follows event follows event. Since south Levantine archaeology is still firmly embedded within an historical paradigm (see above and Chapters 2 and 4), the view of material culture and archaeological sites is such that they too change according to the events described in the texts. Material culture change is thus assumed to be abrupt and complete: city follows city follows city. When radio-carbon dating was introduced in Europe in the 1940s it gradually became clear that material culture did not fit this pattern (Daniel 1975; Trigger 1989) and that instead local developmental sequences of the same material culture type differed considerably chronologically. Material evidence does not follow the trajectory described in historical texts. Instead, material culture develops independently at a local level for reasons not necessarily connected in any way to the events described in historical sources (see Chapter 6). Furthermore, the assumption that each successive city covered the entire tell site at all times ignores the fact that settlement sizes differ through time. Large construction projects may also have dug deep into the site, thereby removing any trace of previous remains and again creating a level with remains from different periods. Therefore, at any one time, remains of a variety of time periods may have been represented on the surface of the site (or indeed on an excavated surface). In addition,

continuity in material culture use means that such chronological differences remain undetected by the locus-to-stratum method. Indeed, material excavated from several different areas of a site may be from several different time periods, even if it is typologically similar and found at the same absolute height within the site. Only the use of radio-carbon, or other scientific dating techniques, can provide the necessary chronological information.

Following this discussion of the way in which archaeological sites are viewed by south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, the development of the particular methods used by the American, British, and Israeli schools of archaeology in the southern Levant will be explored. The implications of these methods for archaeological analysis will also be highlighted. This is crucial, since it is important to emphasise that even though many archaeologists may recognise the points outlined above, their continued use of the locus-to-stratum method carries within it inherent assumptions and biases which condition the data in such a way that it cannot be used for alternative analyses and interpretations. The discussion of excavation methods will begin with the early attempts at excavation in the southern Levant that focused heavily on architecture.

5.3.2 The Architectural Focus

The first excavations in Palestine stressed architecture almost to the exclusion of everything else. Indeed, the main interest lay in discovering buildings and their contents. Principles of stratigraphy were unknown, site formation processes poorly understood, and archaeological techniques were still very much in a developmental state. The depositional sequence of sites was thus often ignored so that precise dating and interpretation of complex architectural phases was impossible. Macalister's work at Gezer from 1902-1909 is a prime example of the architectural bias (Moorey 1991: 32). Much of the German work at Ta'anach, Megiddo, and Shechem also provides a good example of the focus on architecture since plans were often beautifully drawn but stratigraphic control was so lacking that building periods could not even be distinguished, let alone dated. The American excavations at Beth-Shan, Megiddo, Tell en-Nasbeh and Beth Shemesh began as much as twenty years later, but their orientation was also still primarily architectural (Dever 1973: 1*).

5.3.3 G.A. Reisner

The first cogent description of methods and aims in south Levantine archaeology can be found in *Harvard Excavations at Samaria I. 1908-10* (Reisner *et al.* 1924). These excavations were carried out by the Semitic Museum of Harvard University under the direction of G.A. Reisner and with C.S. Fisher as architect. The latter had begun his archaeological fieldwork as an architect with the

University of Pennsylvania's Nippur Expedition in Iraq (1888-1900). Reisner's excavation in Palestine was a brief interlude during his work in Egypt where he had been working since 1899 for the Joint Expedition of Harvard University and the Boston Museum (Wright 1969: 121).

Between 1906 and 1908, when faced by delays and problems with the Turkish authorities, Reisner was forced to leave Palestine for his work in Egypt. When digging at intervals was finally possible for short periods in 1908, Dr Gottlieb Schumacher was made director of the excavations at Samaria. After consultation with Reisner, work began in a trench laid out on the highest part of the summit of the mound in order to discover any large building which Reisner felt ought to be encountered at this point (Wright 1969: 122). Reisner's reactions to Schumacher's work provide an insight into the methods used by Schumacher. Indeed, he stated that;

> 'the stratification could not be made out clearly, although there were walls at various levels. On the other hand, a large building had been found and identified as the temple built by Herod and dedicated to Augustus [...] From an examination of Dr Schumacher's notes and plan and of the trenches themselves, I could learn little more than that a temple had stood on the summit [...] In short, the whole problem of the history of the site remained to be worked out' (Reisner *et al.* 1924: 35).

Reisner's reaction to Schumacher's work clearly reveals that Reisner was ahead of his time in terms of his approach to excavation, since almost all excavations before World War I were conducted using methods similar to those of Schumacher (Wright 1969: 122).

In 1909 Reisner directed the excavations at Samaria himself (Wright 1969). Reisner's understanding of the make-up of archaeological sites is clearly demonstrated by the following passage:

> 'At first the attempt was made to remove the debris layer by layer; but this was quickly found to be impossible, for as soon as the cultivation stratum had been removed there were no regular horizontal strata. The debris of decay of each period had been considerably disturbed during the construction of the buildings of the next period, in the search for building material and in the effort to place the new foundations on rock. As a result, foundations of all periods rested on the rock, and stood side by side. Amid this apparent confusion, however, the successive deposition and disturbance of strata proved easily traceable, at least over certain areas' (Reisner *et al.* 1924: 36).

Based on this understanding, Reisner developed his excavation and recording methods, which he published in the Samaria excavation report. Wright conveniently summarised these as follows:

> '(1) The daily diary, which at the end of each season was typewritten, so that its dated entries could be cut up to provide a history of administrative events and of the excavation of each 'strip' and other digging areas. (2) Maps and plans. The whole site had been planned by Dr Schumacher in 1908 at a scale of 1:2500. Individual plans and sections of each area on a scale of 1:50 presented

> the several periods by different colours. Larger buildings were drawn on a scale of 1:200, while the diary contained many debris sections for reference in writing the final report. (3) The register of objects was carefully kept, each object labelled by strip, provenance, letters for subdivisions of surface debris, and a note of the relation to the floor. [...] Objects were registered and kept by card file arranged according to the class of objects to which they belonged. In addition, a card catalogue was made of large numbers of objects which could not be kept (e.g. a large number of sherds). [...] (4) The photographic record was full. Photographs were examined and labelled on the day following that on which they were taken, and the prints were entered in a photographic register which Reisner himself kept' (Wright 1969: 124).

Reisner's report on his excavations at Samaria was not published until 1924. His work formed the first description of the debris-layer method of digging, which was later reintroduced in a different form by Kenyon in the 1950s (Wright 1969: 124; Dever 1973; see also section 5.3.7 below). All the basic principles of Kenyon's method are already recorded by Reisner, except the use of baulks. Yet in Reisner's Samaria report the publication of sections with debris types labelled and associated with their building phases appeared for the first time (see Reisner *et al.* 1924: 63). Until Kenyon's work at Samaria, which was published in 1957 (see section 5.3.7 below), nothing as detailed and elaborate as Reisner's work appeared in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology.

The reason Reisner's methods were extraordinary for his time was not simply his detailed recording process, but his insight into the nature of south Levantine tells (Wright 1969: 125; Wright 1966: 116-117), and his concentration on debris analysis, rather than simply on walls and architecture. Indeed, Reisner concluded that the only way to extract history from a tell was excavation by the careful detection and separation of layers of debris (Wright 1969; Wright 1966). Reisner's work can therefore still be used effectively today, because the original make-up of a site can still be reconstructed from his publications.

5.3.4 C.S. Fisher

Reisner's methodology was however largely ignored after World War I. This was because Reisner returned to Egypt in 1908 and only those parts of his methodology were followed which Clarence Fisher, his former architect at Samaria, thought important (Wright 1969: 125). Indeed, after Reisner's return to Egypt, Fisher became an immensely influential figure in American archaeology in Palestine. Between World War I and his death in 1941, Fisher served as Professor of Archaeology at the American School of Oriental Research (ASOR) in Jerusalem. Furthermore, he was the initial director or archaeological advisor of every single American excavation undertaken in the 1920s and early 1930s (Moorey 1991: 56; Kuklick 1996). His influence on American archaeology was thus paramount and due to his rejection of many of Reisner's methods, he was

able to divert the developmental course of archaeological method in the southern Levant to his own more architecturally based approach.

In Fisher's *The Excavation of Armageddon* (1929) the aspects of excavation methodology deemed important by Fisher are clearly demonstrated. Of particular interest in this respect is Fisher's conception of digging procedure, conveniently summarised by Wright in the following passage:

> 'The surface is taken off by 30 cm layers of earth, and all objects found in it have area designations preceded by x, indicating such objects are from the 'indefinite surface layers'. Once the tops of walls appear, the workers will be distributed over the square according to 'rooms' (later to be called loci). The rooms are given numbers and the walls are followed 'down to pavement level'. A 'Progress Card' [...] is made out for each room and day by day the progress of work is described, characteristic objects found are listed or drawn and the relation of the room to others is noted' (Wright 1969: 126).

Particularly important is the fact that Fisher makes no mention of Reisner's observation that a tell is a composite of a variety of different debris layers, often of great complexity. In fact, it seems that Fisher favoured the so-called 'Ausschilferungs' method of successively clearing away period by period over the whole, or large area, of a site (Fisher 1929: 26-39; Wright 1969: 118; see for this method also Fisher's work at Nippur [Fisher 1904]). Vertical cuts in a restricted area, following Reisner, were not applied at all. In addition, the question as to how the various periods were to be distinguished was not addressed (Wright 1966: 118). It is clear that Fisher approached excavation as an architect. To him, the importance of excavation lay with the walls and rooms of buildings, which had to be numbered and planned. All objects in the earth from the tops of the walls to the 'pavements' of the rooms were listed as coming from a particular stratum. In the architect's headquarters a cross-section was kept, showing the relationship of the walls to one another without reference to the debris between, above, or below the walls (Fisher 1929: 26-39; Wright 1969: 126).

William F. Badè's *A Manual of Excavation in the Near East. Methods of Digging and Recording of the Tell en-Nasbeh Expedition in Palestine* (1934) represents another rare early example of a description of archaeological methods. In addition, it constitutes another example of the methods used by Fisher. The starting point of work at Tell en-Nasbeh was the preparation of a grid-map of the tell divided into squares measuring 50m x 50m. For area or section work each of these squares was subdivided into 25 squares, measuring 10m x 10m (Badè 1934: 14-16). Excavation was undertaken according to a set of general rules:

> '- No stone must be moved out of its find-location until it is certain that it does not form part of a wall, or in some other respect has architectural significance.
> - All objects found in a room, or tomb, must be cleared and photographed *in situ* before removal.

- Every cover of an opening, whether of tomb, silo, or cistern, must be left untouched until photographed and inspected by the director, and no one may enter through such opening except at his request.
- No basket of artifacts may be moved from its place, or brought down from the mound, until it has been provided with a provenience tag by the field recorder' (Badè 1934: 21).

Apart from these points, no further description of digging procedures is presented in this publication. The remainder of the book is given over to details of the recording procedure used at Nasbeh, essentially that previously described in Fisher's *The Excavation of Armageddon* (1929).

To summarise, Badè paid no attention to the excavation of debris layers and gives no hint of ever having read Reisner's publications. In Badè and Fisher's approach, all objects were simply assigned an x before their number until wall-tops appeared and then room or locus numbers were assigned to each object until the floor or surface was discovered. If such a floor or surface was not found, then an artificial stopping point was chosen more or less at the bottom of the walls in question. All objects found in the earth from the top of the walls down to the floor or wall sittings were listed as coming from the room in question. The series of rooms determined to belong to the same building phase, namely locus numbers a to x, were then assigned to a particular stratum (Fisher 1929; Badè 1934; Wright 1969: 127). Yet a 'locus' determined in such a way will not just contain material that is contemporary with the architectural unit being excavated. By not digging stratigraphically, Badè and Fisher were not able to discern the different phases of a site, let alone reliably relate the excavated material culture to these phases.

5.3.5 W.F. Albright

Since Fisher was Albright's mentor during his early years at the ASOR in Jerusalem (see Chapter 2), Fisher and Badè's methods were employed by Albright at Tell Beit Mirsim in his excavation of the site between 1926 and 1932 (Wright 1966; Wright 1969). Albright wrote, after indicating the standard expositions of Fisher's method in the course of describing his own methods in *Tell Beit Mirsim II* (1938: 8), that:

> 'Of course, this method is only sound when applied with adequate knowledge of pottery and comparative archaeology, otherwise it may conceal thoroughly unsound execution and interpretation.'

This statement is hardly an endorsement of Fisher's methods, but it reveals that Albright was either not aware of Reisner's work, or that he did not consider it significant (Wright 1966: 119). Furthermore, in this publication Albright clearly indicated succinctly that he considered 'adequate knowledge of pottery and comparative archaeology' as primary aspects of archaeological

excavation. Indeed, in all the reports of Albright's excavations there are no sections published which show the relationship between 'debris' layers. Albright clearly thought that he had found what he considered a more useful method for relating finds, structures, and phases to each other than Reisner's 'debris analysis' (Wright 1966: 120). Indeed, on the page following his references to Fisher's methods, Albright states that:

> 'All problems of the attribution of walls to accompanying strata were attacked by considering the pottery context above adjacent floor levels, below such floors, under foundations, in walls which were being broken up for purposes of clearing away an excavated stratum' (Albright 1938: 9).

For Albright, pottery typology thus constituted the means to accurately determine stratigraphy. Confirmation of this is provided by G. Ernest Wright, one of Albright's most influential students, who wrote that;

> 'In preparing the loci of a given stratum for publication he knew what was 'intrusive', out of place, and removed such items before publishing the pottery of the stratum. This has led to the charge that the Americans create the mound's stratigraphy after the excavation is over. There is truth in this charge. Using Fisher's method, there is no other way than the use of reason with the concurrent principles of typology and stratigraphy to assess the stratigraphic content of a mound correctly' (Wright 1969: 128).

In a 1966 article, G.R.H. Wright for the first time coined the term 'locus to stratum method' for Albright's excavation methods and provided the following summary of its main tenets:

> 'The excavations are made and recorded as defined by a series of loci. Each locus being some naturally definable unit, and whenever possible definable with reference to a structure - i.e. on a floor, below a floor, in, under or around a wall etc.; but not inevitably comprehended in a uniform deposit of debris. The finds from the various loci are closely and expertly analysed typologically, and those loci which produce finds of the same typological nature, and hence the structure with which those loci are associated, are said to come from the same 'Stratum' (Wright 1966: 120).

The 'locus to stratum method' was thus initially based on Fisher's methods with his emphasis on architecture, to which Albright added his own element: the use of pottery as a check on stratigraphy. Following his discussion of the overall method, Wright went on to discuss the concept of the stratum. Since he provides both an excellent description of what was meant by a stratum and its inherent problems for archaeological inquiry, I can do no better than to quote him in full:

> 'What is the concept for which this term is used exclusively? Criticism may be anticipated, here, by admitting this term is misleading and ambiguous. Megiddo excavations provide a parallel definition to that of locus illustrating the ambiguity: 'Stratum - a more or less horizontal layer of the site belonging to a particular period' (Guy 1938: 5). This would seek to identify the concept with a physical entity in the earth - a layer or group of layers according to the terms used elsewhere. However usage forbids this identification. Thus 'Stratum X was strongly represented both stratigraphically and ceramically throughout the excavated areas' (Shipton 1938: 17). The corollary of this is that it would have been possible for a Stratum X to exist throughout the

> excavated areas even had it not been represented stratigraphically. In other words, Stratum is used to signify a period perhaps figuratively as a stratum of history, but confusion arises as soon as one seeks to force an equation with a physical stratum. ...A layer of earth of a certain consistency is a layer of earth whatever archaeological import it may or may not have. A 'Stratum', if by that term is meant a certain division in the development or history of something, is an hypostatising of the actual, and should always be recognised as an hypostasis. Such divisions may be convenient devices for facilitating study, but unless they correspond to observed divisions in the disposition of debris, to call them strata would seem to be a gratuitous source of confusion. The demonstration of this confusion is readily apparent when it is sought to incorporate 'debris' sections into the scheme of the Locus to Stratum method. The several 'strata' arrived at by a variety of analytical procedures (Notably by a typological study of the pottery with the assumption that, for the most part, stages in ceramic development and stages in the building history go together - ...) are then entered as labels on the previously drawn section. Inevitably there is great difficulty in deciding to which of the observed layers of debris the various 'strata' correspond. And inevitably terminological difficulties of the type 'Stratum Z was not represented stratigraphically' do occur' (Wright 1966: 122-123).

Wright's discussion of the 'locus to stratum method' clearly highlights the problems with Albright's excavation methods. Firstly, Albright's reliance on pottery typology to determine stratigraphy, which Harris refers to as 'horizontal stratigraphy'. This practice is defined as '[a] method of phasing a site through artefactual analysis and therefore false stratigraphy' (Harris 1979: 124). Secondly, the use of the 'locus' to define the excavation and recording of a site. Albright's conception of the 'locus' was a unit defined on an *a priori* basis (Chapman 1986: 10), since the limits of the locus could not be precisely defined independent of a specific example. As such, it did not represent an 'actual' unit of deposition in the structure of the site as it was laid down in the past. The finds made within this *a priori* unit of excavated soil were therefore not recorded according to the depositional units in which they were found, but according to the *a priori* unit. By doing so, the evidence of the actual interrelations of the depositional units and the artefacts which they contained were destroyed, and the artefacts were related to a derived context (ibid.). Thirdly, the use of the concept 'stratum'. Strata were made up of loci, and as was discussed above, these were *a priori* units that contained, and sometimes cut across, but took no account of the depositional units that made up the physical structure of a site. Moreover, the way loci were assigned to particular strata was determined by their artifactual content rather than by the interrelations that existed between the depositional units. Again, this is an example of 'false stratigraphy' (Harris 1979: 124). The use of strata therefore meant that material culture was not related to meaningful deposits.

Instead, material culture was related to concepts that were determined by historical interests. At the time, archaeology was firmly placed within an historical paradigm. The 'historical role' of archaeology was to provide the scene for historical events, as well as an illustration of those events (Andrén 1998; Halsall 1997). In practice, this meant that in the early stages of archaeological excavation in the southern Levant the concern lay primarily with finding 'things', architecture, pottery, and rich finds for example. Hence the focus on digging in architecturally defined 'loci'.

In addition, the position of archaeology within an historical paradigm meant that changes in material culture were equated to specific historical episodes as presented in texts. This was to provide order through time for the excavated archaeological remains, as chronology was one of the main concerns of the day. This meant that sites were understood in terms of discrete 'strata' represented by different material culture styles that represented different episodes in history. From this perspective, Albright saw pottery as a means to determine stratigraphy, because for Albright different pottery styles meant different periods in history. This provided him with a convenient framework of material culture horizons to which he could relate events in biblical history.

Strata were thus determined by a typological study of the pottery on the assumption that, for the most part, stages in the ceramic development and stages in the building history of a site went together. Confusion occurred when the physical stratification of the site was equated with the historically determined pottery horizons. The several 'strata' arrived at by typological study of the pottery were used as labels on previously drawn sections. Inevitably, difficulties occurred in deciding to which of the observed layers of debris the various 'strata' corresponded. This was because a 'stratum', in Albright's sense, was based on logical construct rather than on observed divisions in debris deposits. As Wright pointed out, strata denoted a certain division in the development of history, and as such were 'an hypostatising of the actual' (Wright 1966: 122-23). These divisions thus bore no relation to the physical reality of the make-up of an archaeological site with its complex depositional history.

Despite the drawbacks of Albright's methods, his work led the way for other American excavators. Due to Albright's immense authority, other American archaeologists were influenced strongly by his methods and went on to excavate at Bethel (1934) and at Tell en-Nasbeh (1926-35) (Dever 1973: 43). One of the most influential of these scholars was G.E. Wright, who began excavations at Beth Shemesh 1928 and 1933. Wright wrote about this influence stating that;

> 'Rowe's use of Fisher's method in the final campaign of Elihu Grant and Haverford College at Beth-Shemesh in 1933 was what enabled the writer to use Albright's procedures to present the site's stratigraphy and at the same time to add a number of detailed observations on ceramic chronology as a supplement to Albright's analysis of the Tell Beit Mirsim material. Where a high degree of 'automation' is used without the use of the critical reason in presenting the strata derived from Fisher's method, the result is the unfortunate mixture of items 'which do not belong' in given strata' (Wright 1969: 128).

Due to Albright's phenomenal influence his method of excavation became standard practice among American archaeologists working in the southern Levant. In fact, this continued until Kathleen Kenyon introduced her new excavation methods years later in the early 1950s (see section 5.3.7).

Albright's methods did not only exert tremendous influence on American Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant, but also on the emerging Israeli school of archaeology. During Albright's heyday, the first Jewish archaeologists in Palestine became active in the field, many of them under the tutelage of Albright. The foundations of the later 'Israeli School' of archaeology were laid in the work of such scholars as L.A. Mayer, E. Sukenik, A. Bergman (Biran), B. Maisler (Mazar), N. Avigad, M. Avi-Yonah, I. Ben-Dor, and others (Dever 1973: 43). Albright's influence on Israeli archaeology will be discussed in more detail in section 5.3.9. First however, the influence Albright's methods had on the archaeology of Jordan will be discussed.

5.3.6 Nelson Glueck

Albright's methods of excavation spread to Jordan through the work of Nelson Glueck. Indeed, Glueck was one of Albright's first students (see Chapter 2). Glueck's work in southern Jordan is of particular importance to the present study, since he represents the first archaeologist to undertake survey and excavation in this region. Between 1938 and 1940, Glueck undertook the first excavation of an Iron Age site in southern Jordan at Tell el-Kheleifeh. As was discussed in Chapter 3, his excavations brought to light the first archaeological material in southern Jordan to be associated with 'Edom' and the 'Edomites'.

The most extensive discussion of Glueck's excavation methods is provided by Chapter 2 of *Nelson Glueck's 1938-1940 Excavations at Tell el-Kheleifeh. A Reappraisal* (1993). Pratico first of all describes the excavation unit used by Glueck. This unit, for purposes of recording, fell broadly into three categories: room, street, and square (Pratico 1993: 13). The problems with Glueck's excavation unit are clearly described by Pratico:

> 'Apart from a general compass orientation, the specific location of artefacts or architectural features within the excavation is not recorded. In the majority of discussions, refinement is impossible apart from the confines of the five meter unit, and there are instances in which 'street' features are discussed without being localised within an area of four squares. The intersection of rooms provides the only reliable refinement within the excavation unit [Furthermore] Pinkerfeld's [the architect of the excavation] 1939 and 1940 level logs provide the data for little more than a 'floating' stratigraphy. Although a site benchmark was established for measuring the site's topographical features, topsoil was used as the benchmark for the levels of artefacts and architectural features. The variable surface thus produced a 'floating' system of level notations'. Attempts to reconstruct the surface benchmarks at key points on the mound were not successful. Added to the lack of vertical control, no sections within the excavation units were produced [...] Pinkerfeld's plans correspond to stratigraphic realities only for the major fortification outlines and features of monumental architecture such as the four-room building. That is especially true for the plans presented in pls. 4-6. The criteria for the architectural composition of those 'period' plans are obscure at best. Studied in the context of Glueck's field diaries and Pinkerfeld's notebooks, the plans appear to represent excavation realities more than stratigraphic ones' (Pratico 1993: 13-15).

Moreover, in Glueck's field and dictated notes, artefacts were recorded, with few exceptions, by general description and not by registry number. Pratico found that it was therefore often impossible to match the description and the registry number (ibid.: 15). Furthermore, registry information was only sometimes available from the Room File, which recorded selected artefacts in the categories of registry number, photographic references, level, and general description (ibid.: 11). However, the main artefact registry and the Room File contained hundreds of errors and discrepancies in data recording. The pottery drawings were frequently mis-numbered and were generally of very poor quality, yet those drawings often constituted the only record available for the several dozen significant artefacts that could no longer be located (ibid.: 13-15).

Lastly, Pratico notes that the occupational periods that Glueck and Pinkerfeld discerned were for the most part not based on stratigraphy or ceramics, but on biblical history (ibid.: 15). Indeed, he states that;

> 'The Tell el-Kheleifeh-Ezion-geber - Elath identification provided the confines of interpretation. The site's archaeological data was made to conform to the historical contours of the biblical sites' (ibid.: 17).

Tell el-Kheleifeh was first identified with biblical Ezion-geber by the German explorer Fritz Frank in 1934 (Frank 1934: 243-45). Glueck's unreserved acceptance of the identification, at least initially, is reflected throughout his early publications (Glueck 1935; 1938a; 1938b; 1939a; 1939b). The identification of Tell el-Kheleifeh was complicated by the historical problem of the relationship between the biblical sites of Ezion-geber and Elath however (Pratico 1993: 19). Nevertheless, Glueck eventually presented his definitive synthesis of the historical problem of Tell el-Kheleifeh, Elath and Ezion-geber in a study of the site's history and topography (1940a: 12; 1965: 85-86). The archaeological data of three seasons were interpreted in light of that historical synthesis. His early stratigraphic designations for example - although Glueck later abandoned them - reflected the site's change of name. Indeed, the third occupational level, assigned to Uzziah, was designated 'Elath I' (Glueck 1939a: 20).

As a final comment on the consequences of Glueck's identification of Tell el-Kheleifeh with Ezion-geber - Elath, Pratico writes that;

> 'The history of the interpretation of Tell el-Kheleifeh, its stratigraphy, ceramic and architectural traditions, and historical and cultural synthesis represents a paramount case study in the dangers of *a priori* identification. As is clear from nearly every entry in Glueck's bibliography, the biblical framework of identification became the principle of interpretation. The stratigraphic sequence,

> which slowly emerged through three seasons of excavation, was continually interpreted and revised in light of the biblical glimpses of Ezion-geber and Elath. The fragmentary biblical notices became a stratigraphic framework that inflexibly accommodated any revision in the archaeological data' (Pratico 1993: 21).

The final results of Glueck's three seasons were never published, although he did produce a series of preliminary reports (Glueck 1938a; 1938b; 1939a; 1939b; 1940a). Pratico's reappraisal of Glueck's excavation at Tell el-Kheleifeh would have been hindered by any of the many problems mentioned above. The combination was debilitating. Pratico emphasises that his study is therefore not intended as a final excavation report, but rather as an attempt to focus on areas of Tell el-Kheleifeh's excavation that do allow meaningful comment (Pratico 1993: 15).

It is thus clear from the discussion of Glueck's methods and Pratico's attempts at using his excavation records to reach conclusions about the archaeological sequence at Tell el-Kheleifeh, that the excavation and recording methods used by Glueck were highly problematic. Indeed, as a result of those methods, Tell el-Kheleifeh's stratigraphy, ceramic sequence, and contextual information remain elusive. Glueck's excavations at Tell el-Kheleifeh thus provide a telling example of the problems caused by the application of Fisher and Albright's methods to archaeological excavation and recording.

5.3.7 Kathleen Kenyon

In 1952, Kathleen Kenyon's book *Beginning in Archaeology* ushered in a new era of archaeological method in the southern Levant. Indeed, following the publication of this book, and especially her successful work at Jericho and Jerusalem, there was a shift to stratigraphic principles of digging (Dever 1973; Lapp 1969). Kenyon's earlier work at Samaria (1931-1935) was not well known until the publication of *Samaria, III: The Objects* in 1957 (Crowfoot *et al.* 1957); and an earlier article, entitled *Excavation Methods in Palestine* in 1939 had not been particularly influential (Dever 1973: 2*). Behind her new methods lay the work of Sir Mortimer Wheeler in Britain and later in the Near East, but his definitive statement of principles was not published until 1954 in *Archaeology from the Earth.*

Kenyon's method of excavation was based on digging squares of 5m x 5m within a grid, leaving intervening 'baulks' which were then used to see the debris in section and to guide careful probing and stripping of the debris. Digging proceeded not by architectural strata, much less by artificial levels, but rather by following the natural stratification, separating soil layers by colours, texture, depositional character and so on. The baulks were then drawn to scale, and the section-drawings

became the basis of the publication, with all objects and architecture related to them (Kenyon 1960). This system introduced the element of control that made it possible to separate debris layers and the objects they contained with much greater accuracy than any previous methods. Kenyon's methods were not without their problems however. One of the main drawbacks to her approach was the fact that it did not allow for the clear exposure of large areas, since the baulks had to be left in place. In other words, the relationships between architectural and other archaeological features were sometimes obscured by the baulks. In addition, although the baulks allowed the determination of vertical stratigraphic relationships with a much greater degree of accuracy than ever before, it was often difficult to relate the layers recorded in each individual section to each other across the site. Horizontal stratigraphy thus remained difficult to determine.

Nevertheless, Kenyon's approach to excavation became very influential. Her methods were employed mainly in Jordan by her colleagues and students, notably P. Parr, C.-M. Bennett, D. Kirkbride, B. Hennessy, and K. Prag (Lapp 1969: 72). Australian, Dutch, and Danish archaeologists also applied her methods after being associated with, or trained on, Kenyon's excavations. The most notable of these was the Dutch scholar Henk Franken whose work at Tell Deir 'Alla became well known. Her methods had a less direct, but still important, influence on American and Israeli excavations (ibid.: 74).

Indeed, the first instance where Kenyon's methods influenced American fieldwork was in the second campaign of the ASOR at Dhiban in Transjordan in 1952. Several supervisors on this excavation had been trained at Jericho (Dever 1973: 2). The first large-scale American application of Kenyon's methods however, was the Drew-McCormick-ASOR excavation at Balatah (Shechem), begun by Wright in 1956. The Shechem project was founded on the premise of an excavation as a deliberate training-ground in archaeological methods. These excavations, which continued until 1969, directly influenced nearly all subsequent American work, and the senior staffs of the Ta'anach, 'Ai and Gezer expeditions were nearly all trained there (Lapp 1969; Dever 1973). Furthermore, the Gezer excavations under the direction of Wright (1964-65) and Dever (1966-71) carried on these traditions in Israel, exerting influence on Israeli scholars and training most of the senior staffs of ASOR-sponsored digs in Israel after 1967 - notably at Tell el-Hesi and Khirbet Shema' (Dever 1973: 2).

Although the Shechem excavation attempted to employ the stratigraphic methods espoused by Kenyon, it fell short of the British tradition (ibid.: 74). Indeed, as Lapp wrote about these excavations:

> 'It is just 10 years since I had my first archaeological field experience at Shechem. I was given a small notebook and told to write down observations on anything important that was discovered. We drew no plans or sections; that was left to the architect. There was no absolute elevation and no over-all site grid for us to use. Standing around waiting for something important to appear was quite a bore' (Lapp 1969: 85).

Despite the adoption of Kenyon's approach to excavation, it is clear that the American excavation methods used at Schechem did not change substantially from those used previously. Real changes in American archaeological methods in the southern Levant did not really occur until the excavations at Gezer which will be discussed in section 5.3.10 below.

In contrast to American archaeology, Kenyon's methods were highly influential in British archaeology in the southern Levant. Indeed, her methods came to dominate British archaeology in this region. While Kenyon herself had excavated mainly in the West Bank (then part of Jordan), her methods were employed predominantly in Jordan by her students and colleagues. The most important of these for the present study is C.-M. Bennett who - after Glueck - was one of the first to excavate Iron Age sites in southern Jordan.

5.3.8 Crystal-M. Bennett

Bennett's excavations at Buseirah, Tawilan, and Umm el-Biyara brought to light most of the archaeological material in southern Jordan that has become associated with 'Edom' and the 'Edomites'. The most extensive publication on Bennett's excavation methods is provided by the first chapter in *Excavations at Tawilan in Southern Jordan* (Bennett and Bienkowski 1995). This chapter clearly demonstrates the influence of Kenyon's methods on Bennett's work. Indeed, the major unit descriptions used by Bennett at Tawilan are described as follows:

> '*Trench* was the largest excavation division. Six trenches were excavated, numbered in Roman numerals I-VI.
> *Locus* was the main horizontal subdivision of a Trench. [...] Loci were subdivided vertically by layers/levels.
> *Layer/level* was the major vertical subdivision of a locus. This was the basic unit of excavation, as used also by Kenyon (c.f. Franken and Steiner 1990: 5). A layer/level was any soil deposit distinguished on the basis of texture, colour or composition, irrespective of its origin, function or contents. [...]
> *Wall* was a structure of stone. [...]
> *Feature* was an architectural feature or permanent installation. Features included pits, pillars, steps, burials, and occasionally walls. [...]' (ibid.: 17).

Following these definitions, it is described how, due to a number of unexpected difficulties, Bennett was often absent from the excavations, and that as a result site supervisors were often left on their own with little guidance. It is further noted that much of the information recorded in the field note books consisted of a series of soil descriptions, that there was little attempt by the site supervisors to

interpret loci, and that it was often unclear what the relationship of one locus was to other loci, features and walls. Section drawings also often bore no relationship at all to descriptions in the site notebooks (ibid.: 16).

Despite these shortcomings, the Tawilan excavations were conducted on the basis of careful separation of deposits - following Kenyon - rather than architecture and pottery typology. Trenches were cut into the excavation area and these were in turn subdivided horizontally into loci. Judging from the plans in the report the loci were not based on architectural units. Within each of these loci, vertical layers were established on the basis of any soil deposit that could be distinguished on the basis of texture, colour or composition, irrespective of its origin, function or contents. Bennett also used these excavation methods at Buseirah and Umm el-Biyara (Bienkowski pers. comm.; Hart 1989: 21-22).

While Bennett's methods are now outmoded, it is - in theory - still possible to use her excavation results effectively to reconstruct the make-up of the sites and the relationships between the architecture, finds and other features she excavated. However, due to the problems with recording raised in the final Tawilan report, this is not possible for all the areas excavated at Tawilan. Recording at Buseirah and Umm el-Biyara was even more problematic than at Tawilan (Bienkowski pers. comm.). Reconstruction of the excavated areas at Tawilan, Umm el-Biyara, and Buseirah is therefore virtually impossible (see also Chapter 8). In summary therefore, although Kenyon's methods were applied to these excavations, due to their poor execution the Iron Age material evidence recovered from these sites is of limited value for archaeological analysis.

5.3.9 Israeli Archaeology

While all these developments in the British and American schools of south Levantine archaeology were taking place, Israeli scholars were beginning to establish their own school of archaeology in the area. Indeed, after the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948, the first task was to lay the groundwork for a national archaeological programme (Dever 1973). Although B. Mazar and others were already in the field before 1950 (e.g. Tel Qasile 1948-1950; see also Chapter 2), the 'Israeli School' of archaeology first came to international prominence with the large excavations of Y. Yadin and others at Hazor (1955-1958). This was followed in the 1960s by numerous Israeli excavations, including that of Y. Aharoni at Ramat Rahel, M. Dothan at Ashdod, of Y. Aharoni and R. Amiran at Tel Arad, of Y. Yadin at Masada, and of A. Biran at Tel Dan (Dever 1985). There were a number of distinctive features to the Israeli school during these early years. These included the concentrated effort to recover a national history, particularly of the Canaanite and Israelite eras,

a preference for large-scale exposure of architecture at virgin sites, and an emphasis on building up a corpus of whole pottery found *in situ*, rather than detailed analysis of sherds. In addition, their isolation from archaeological developments elsewhere, meant that Israeli scholars did not take full advantage of the stratigraphical 'revolution' started by Kenyon until the 1970s (Dever 1980b: 45). As a consequence, architectural phasing remained imprecise, and interpretations remained needlessly controversial. Furthermore, like many British and American projects, publication fell far behind fieldwork with some sites remaining unpublished even today (see section 5.5 below).

The only explicit statement in Israeli Iron Age archaeological literature on excavation methods is given in the excavation manual published as Chapter 23 of *Beersheba I* (Aharoni 1973a: 119-32), and in the related article in *Eretz Israel* vol. 11 (Aharoni 1973b: 48-53). The 1973 article demonstrates that the Israeli approach to excavation was remarkably similar to that of Fisher and Albright, especially in their concern for architecture and pottery vessels *in situ*. This is clearly illustrated by the following excerpt;

> 'The method followed in most Israeli excavations aims to avoid two shortcomings of the commonly accepted, Kenyon-Wright method: the neglect of the architecture and that of vessels in situ. The observations of sections (baulks) is only one of the means of accurate stratigraphy and should not become an aim in itself. Systematic baulks conceal architecture and hamper restoration of pottery, which are definite (although immediate) aims of any excavation. Only vessels from floor levels are reliable stratigraphical material, and dating based on stray sherds can be very misleading. Therefore, every effort should be directed toward restoration of pottery. A basic aid for this are daily basket lists, accompanied by graphic sketches and the marking of all sherds of significance with serial basket numbers. Baulks should be adapted to fit the architecture and should be removed when a clear floor level with pottery is reached. The study of baulks is indispensable in stratigraphy, but their drawings remain subjective; their publication in a report most often is useless, for they constitute merely the stratigraphical interpretation of the particular excavator and cannot be subsequently be checked and corrected. If they substitute for the proper publication of the architecture of buildings and their contents, they become obstructive and are of negative value' (Aharoni 1973b: 48).

Fisher and Albright's legacy is also apparent from the definitions provided for the terms 'locus' and the 'stratum' in the excavation manual published as Chapter 23 in *Beersheba I* (Aharoni 1973a: 119-32). The 'locus' for example, was understood as:

> 'Any defined area of the excavation from which finds are recorded, i.e. usually rooms. Installations or pits inside a locus may or may not receive special loci numbers, depending on the considerations of the area supervisor regarding finds, importance, etc. The locus number must be changed with the removal of any floor, especially if it had contained vessels for restoration. The basket(s) containing the material of the actual floor removal still belongs to the overlying locus. Since finds are registered and kept according to loci, start immediately with a locus number in any fresh square. With the appearance of walls, this number may be kept for one of the rooms. With the exception of this case, never keep a locus number if its area or stratum is changed' (ibid.: 119-120).

The next step in the approach described in the Beersheba volume is to group the loci into 'strata'. A 'stratum' in the Beersheba volume is defined as;

> 'all the layers which belong to a certain occupation phase, usually the fill beneath the floor, the floor itself, the debris on the floor and the accumulation of soil. Special care should be given to the isolation of material lying on the floor: it is the most reliable material of the stratum' (ibid.: 119).

The excavation methods used by the Israelis can thus be traced back directly to those used by Albright and Fisher. As a result, they inherited the emphasis on architecture from Fisher as well as Albright's focus on pottery, in short, the 'locus to stratum method' of excavation.

Fisher's methods are especially evident in the way a locus is defined. The limits of a locus are determined according to a specific example - notably architecture - and cannot be precisely defined independent of a specific example. The locus is thus a unit defined on an *a priori* basis (Chapman 1986: 10). In other words, the association between the artefacts contained in a given locus is based on logical construct rather than on a consideration of the archaeological context from which they derive. Furthermore, the Beersheba manual defines the locus as including whatever number of complete or partial 'depositional units' happen to fall within it. As such it does not represent an 'actual' unit of deposition in the structure of the site as it was laid down in the past. In this way, the 'locus to stratum method' destroys the evidence of the actual interrelations between the depositional units and the artefacts they contain. Instead, artefacts are related to a derived context.

Albright's influence is particularly clear in the way strata are determined. Strata are made up of loci, and the way loci are assigned to particular strata seems to be as much influenced by their artefactual content (notably pottery on floors), as by the interrelations that exist between the depositional units. This is corroborated by the preliminary Beersheba report where the stratigraphy of the site is discussed in terms of comparative pottery typology; the stratigraphy itself is hardly mentioned (Aharoni 1973a: 4-8). To reiterate, this has been referred to as 'horizontal stratigraphy' by Harris, who defines it as '[a] method of phasing a site through artefactual analysis and therefore false stratigraphy' (Harris 1979: 124).

In addition, the Israeli method of excavation places particular emphasis on pottery from the floors of a building. The premise is that only finds from the floors of a building can be dated with certainty to any part of the period during which the building was in use, and that therefore, only these finds are useful (Aharoni 1973b: 23*). However, dating evidence provided by artefacts found on floors is useful, but it is not necessarily more reliable than other pottery groups, and it is not the only source of evidence available for dating. Indeed, time will have elapsed between the construction, use,

abandonment/destruction, and potential re-use of a building. Material on a floor may thus be from a very much later occupation, or other use of that floor, or it may be intrusive.

Aharoni states that the procedures described in the Beersheba manual 'are the result of the combined experience of the Arad and Beersheba expeditions. The system had its beginnings in Ramat Rahel (1954, 1959-1962) and Hazor (1955-1958)' (Aharoni 1973a: 119). This indicates that not only Beersheba, but Arad and Ramat Rahel were excavated by the 'locus to stratum method'. A brief look at some recent excavation reports of other Iron Age sites shows that their excavation was also conducted using the 'locus to stratum method' as defined by Aharoni (ibid.; Aharoni 1973b). These sites include for example Horvat Qitmit (Beit-Arieh 1995a), Tel Masos (Fritz and Kempinski 1983), Horvat 'Uza (Beit-Arieh and Cresson 1991), En Haseva (Cohen and Yisrael 1996), Tel 'Ira (Beit-Arieh 1999), Kadesh Barnea (Cohen 1981), Aroer (Biran 1983), and Megiddo (Finkelstein *et al.* 2000a). The 'locus to stratum method' therefore still represents the main approach to excavation in use by Israeli Iron Age archaeologists today. As a result, all excavation activity is centred on architecture, and the only finds that are discussed in reports are those found on floors. Furthermore, only these finds are used for dating purposes.

In summary, it has been clearly demonstrated that Israeli excavation methods of Iron Age sites in the southern Levant remain essentially the same as those practised by American archaeologists in the 1930s and 1940s. The present Israeli method of excavation thus excavates and records artefacts according to *a priori* units and false stratigraphy. This means that it is impossible to work back from the excavated and recorded remains to the actual depositional structure of an archaeological site. It is therefore also impossible to reconstruct the complex sequence of material culture use at a site. In short, this method does not facilitate the accurate reconstruction of past human life on archaeological sites.

However, since the main focus of Israeli Iron Age archaeology is still on the relationship between archaeology and the biblical narratives (see Chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5), the 'locus to stratum method' is still adhered to. This is because it provides the necessary material culture framework to which biblical history can be related. Indeed, as culture-history remains the dominant theoretical framework of Israeli Iron Age archaeology (see Chapter 6), the 'locus to stratum method' produces neat material culture 'blocks' in the form of strata that are characterised by a particular style of material evidence, which are equated with particular people(s) or events from historical sources. Since an historical framework still determines the interpretative universe of Israeli archaeology, the 'locus to stratum method' therefore produces exactly the type of material evidence required by such an approach. It is only when alternative interpretative and analytical approaches are attempted using

data excavated by this method that problems occur. Alternative interpretations of Iron Age material culture are thus virtually impossible to achieve (see for example Chapters 7, 8, and 9 for the problems encountered in this study).

5.3.10 The American Excavations at Gezer

At about the same time as Aharoni's statements on the Israeli method were published, one of the first detailed statements on American methods of excavation was produced. This was published as *A Manual of Field Excavation. Handbook for Field Archaeologists* (Dever and Lance 1978). Although this book was not published until 1978, it was based on fieldwork as it was practised at the Hebrew Union College/Harvard Semitic Museum Excavations at Gezer between 1964 and 1971. The motivation for this was that many of the concepts, methods, and procedures developed at Gezer had spread widely to other American excavations in Israel and Jordan through the medium of staff members who received their training at Gezer (ibid.). This made the excavators feel that a detailed statement on methodology was necessary. The methods used at Gezer under the direction of Wright (1964-65) and Dever (1966-71) were a direct continuation of the methodology developed at Shechem (Lapp 1969; Dever 1973). At Shechem, Wright had attempted to put into practice Kenyon's excavation methods alongside the methods inherited from Albright. However, it was the Gezer excavations that fused these two approaches into the distinctive method of excavation still in use by American Iron Age scholars in the southern Levant today.

In the first chapter of Dever and Lance's excavation manual, Walker discusses stratigraphy and ceramic typology (Walker 1978). The stratigraphic methods described are based on Wheeler and Kenyon's principles, in other words the excavation of soil layers in reverse order of their deposition by close attention to the relation of soils and features by using baulks (ibid.: 4). Walker then goes on to discuss the 'locus' as the basic unit of recording and describes it as 'any material whose composition or stratigraphic position seems to mark it as discreet' (ibid.). Further on, Walker states that the daily analysis of the pottery from each locus under excavation, first introduced at the excavations by G. Ernest Wright at Shechem, forms the second fundamental characteristic of the Gezer method. All the pottery was 'read', or in other words dated, as soon as it had been washed and dried. This served as a check upon the clear identification and clean separation of loci in the process of excavation (ibid.: 5). As these statements clearly show, the methods of Kenyon and Albright were fused in the excavations at Gezer.

In Chapter 4 of the manual, Lance discusses the 'locus' and other methods of recording in more detail (Lance 1978). He describes three theoretical 'tools' which were central to the excavation and

recording system employed at Gezer. These concepts included digging in squares or rectangles of a standard size (in this case 5m x 5m), the 'locus', and the 'pottery basket' (ibid.: 75). The importance of digging in squares lay in the fact that the carefully scraped sides of the 5 x 5 squares showed in section the vertical relationship of the strata. Furthermore, the locus was described as 'the smallest coherent unit of stratigraphy' and the pottery basket as 'the smallest unit of excavation' (ibid.: 76). Defining the locus more closely, Lance writes that;

> 'In practice the locus is any stratigraphic unit which can be meaningfully isolated from those adjacent to it' (ibid.). He emphasises that the term 'meaningfully isolated' is important since 'this concept of locus, taken to an extreme, might declare each striation or lens in a fill or each thin resurfacing of a beaten surface to be a locus, breaking the stratification into thousands of fragments which could not be meaningfully re-assembled. Thus a locus as the term was used at Gezer is not entirely empirical - some subjective judgement was usually called for' (ibid.).

This statement shows that although the excavators at Gezer were using the stratigraphic principles espoused by Kenyon, they only used them to *an extent.* At a certain, indefinable point, the locus became defined by terms other than the separate archaeological deposits observable on a site. Lance does not clarify what these alternative terms might be. It seems that, following Albright, these terms might have consisted of pottery typology because Lance writes that 'the system has flexibility [m]istakes can be corrected and loci redefined [...] for pottery and objects are tied permanently only to the pottery basket, not to the locus' (ibid.: 77). An important corrective relationship between the pottery basket and the locus thus existed in the methodology used at Gezer. This clearly echoes Albright's approach to stratigraphy.

Turning now to the concept of the 'pottery basket', this term, as used at Gezer, had two distinct but related meanings. The first was the actual plastic bucket, tagged and containing sherds recovered from an excavated area. The second meaning of the phrase was the three-dimensional section of the tell which produced that particular bucket of pottery (ibid.: 75). The pottery basket could therefore never be subdivided, it remained forever a unit defined by its description in the field notebook. The pottery basket was thus the smallest unit of excavation and as such, the sequential numbering of pottery baskets formed the basic framework of the field notebook. At the time it was excavated, it had to be attributed to a particular locus although hindsight meant that a basket with its associated pottery and small finds could be shifted from one locus to another. There were several possibilities for correcting the relationship between baskets and loci after the excavation season. Since in the Gezer system the daily 'reading' of the pottery from each pottery basket served as a check on the stratigraphy, a basket of pottery, which was dug as part of one locus, could be shifted to another if the pottery was deemed to be inexplicably earlier or later (ibid.: 78-80). According to Lance '[t]his

is not an arbitrary manhandling of the evidence as long as the stratigraphy is given equal weight with the pottery readings' (ibid.: 79).

In the Gezer system, a locus thus consisted of a 'unit of stratigraphy' defined by arbitrary parameters determined by the excavator, as well as one or more 'pottery baskets'. Therefore, if it was the basket that formed the basic framework of the recording procedure, and if the basket was defined as a collection of objects derived from a particular unit of soil, and if the description of that basket consisted of a description of those objects, then it follows that the excavation procedure at Gezer was governed by artefact typology, rather than by true stratigraphy. This is corroborated by the fact that a basket could be allocated to another locus - i.e. loci could change - but baskets remained indivisible. In other words, artefact typology carried more weight in determining stratigraphic relationships than the actual soil and/or material culture deposits that formed the make-up of an archaeological site.

Lance and Walker's chapters in the Gezer field manual thus clearly demonstrate that the excavation methods used at Gezer were still essentially informed by the methods of Albright. Knowledge of stratigraphy and the definition of a 'locus' was influenced by the work of Kenyon, but the stratigraphy was still largely determined by pottery typology. Kenyon's methods were thus never really properly applied. It could be argued that this was because the point of her methods was never really understood. The idea that loci could be 'meaningfully isolated' based on criteria other than stratigraphy and the view that 'pottery baskets' could be moved between loci on the basis of typology, reveal that there was no recognition of site formation processes and the meaning and use of material culture. These ideas betray that there was a lack of understanding that it is stratigraphy which allows a detailed picture to be built up of how a site was formed in the past, and how the material evidence excavated at that site relates to that. This is vital information since all material culture on an archaeological site is in a particular deposit for a particular reason since a variety of human and natural processes caused it to be there. These processes include for example animal burrowing, erosion, foundation and pit digging, burials, landfills, re-use of buildings or spaces, looting, agricultural and building activities, the digging of wells, and so on and so forth. The exact nature and location of a deposit on an archaeological site is therefore of crucial importance to the interpretation of excavated material culture since it determines how it came to be deposited there. It is therefore not possible to simply move pottery baskets from one locus to another because they contain 'later' or 'earlier' material. This material came to be deposited where it was due to specific processes on which modern typological considerations have no bearing.

Due to the immense influence of Albright and Fisher's methods, and the fact that American Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant grew out of a scholarly tradition primarily concerned with biblical studies rather than archaeology *per sé*, a great deal of emphasis was placed on typology and architecture, and an understanding of site formation processes and the meaning and use of material culture was never really developed. Since American scholars were primarily concerned with relating the biblical narratives to the material culture of the southern Levant, their methods produced results that could be conveniently associated with events and people(s) in the historical sources. The point of Kenyon's methods was thus never very pertinent to the American school of archaeology since for their interpretative purposes their methods were not problematic. However, when reanalysis or reinterpretation of their data is attempted, problems occur. The American excavation and recording system makes it very difficult to work back from the excavated and published data to the actual make-up of an archaeological site. Alternative interpretations of the data are thus rendered virtually impossible.

Nevertheless, the Gezer excavations provided the basis for all subsequent American Iron Age projects in the southern Levant since most of the senior staffs of ASOR-sponsored digs in Israel after 1967 were trained at Gezer (Dever 1973: 2). This perpetuated the use of methods that were simply a refined version of those practised by archaeologists in the 1930s and 1940s, well into the late 1970s. Furthermore, a consideration of recent reports on American Iron Age excavations in the southern Levant shows that the Gezer system still forms the basis of the excavation and recording systems that are in use by many American archaeologists today (e.g. Dahlberg and O'Connell 1989; Geraty *et al.* 1989; Herr *et al.* 1991; Dothan and Gitin 1993; LaBianca *et al.* 1990; 1995).

5.3.11 Summary

The description of the development of excavation and recording methods in the southern Levant has demonstrated that very specific methods of excavation developed in this region that were strongly influenced by historical aims. These methods pose a significant problem for the reanalysis and reinterpretation of data, since material culture excavated according to these approaches cannot be used within any theoretical framework other than culture-history. For many current theoretical and analytical approaches south Levantine Iron Age material evidence is thus practically impossible to use. This is especially problematic since the vast majority of Iron Age excavations in the southern Levant today are undertaken by American or Israeli archaeologists (e.g. the American excavations at Tel Miqne, Hesban, Tel el-Farah South, Tel el-Umeiri, Beth Shan, and the Israeli Antiquities Authority (rescue) excavations throughout Israel, as well as Israeli University led excavations such as those at Megiddo). So although for example the method of British projects in the southern Levant

has changed to single context excavation along with developments in British archaeology (e.g. Baird and Philip 1992; 1993; Peltenburg *et al.* 1998), the dominance of American and Israeli projects has meant the perpetuation of their problematic approaches.

It is therefore important that Iron Age archaeologists working in the southern Levant are aware of the inherent assumptions within the 'locus to stratum method' which condition the data in such a way that it cannot be used for alternative interpretations. Hence, it is crucial that the south Levantine Iron Age archaeologists who advocate reanalysis and reinterpretation of the Iron Age material evidence in this area, also address the way in which this can and should be done by reassessing traditional methods.

5.4 Material Culture Analysis in South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology

5.4.1 Introduction

In addition to excavation methods, the interpretative methods used in south Levantine Iron Age archaeological analysis described in section 5.2 have created problems for material culture analysis. As has been shown, south Levantine Iron Age archaeology focuses on the archaeological correlates of 'historical events' and lacks a perspective on human behaviour and archaeological residues. As a result, typo-chronological studies have formed the vast majority of analytical work carried out on Iron Age material culture. While this approach has its place, and has been instrumental in contributing to our initial knowledge of Iron Age material evidence, there are many fruitful avenues of analysis that have not been explored due to the reliance on an historical framework of interpretation. The reason for this development is thus the idea that material culture is essentially uninformative, and that textual sources provide all the necessary information for its interpretation (see section 5.2.3 above). There are however a number of problems with this view that require discussion.

5.4.2 The Nature of Information Provided by Texts and Archaeology

As was shown in Chapter 4, the Old Testament provides *one particular* view of *a* past, and cannot be used as an interpretative framework for all material culture dated to the Iron Age in the southern Levant. This material culture will have been used by many different people, at different times, in different places, for different reasons and with different meanings. It represents many different pasts, not just the one imparted by the Old Testament. To take one text, with one particular view, belonging to one particular group of people (or groups of people), and to impose that view of 'what happened' onto material culture - whilst at the same time assuming both a place and a time period

as a setting for those happenings - is to conflate two different things: the world in the text and the world as lived by many different human beings in all its complexity in the past. In other words, the Old Testament portrays *a* past as it views it, but it should not be used as a means to interpret the Iron Age material culture of the southern Levant, since that material evidence may not have anything to do with what is being described in the texts. To presuppose that, is to conflate two entirely different things: 'biblical Israel' and the people who lived in the southern Levant during the Iron Age.

By interpreting material culture through historical texts, the lives lived by people in the Iron Age southern Levant have been largely substituted with a paraphrase of the biblical narratives. In other words, by assuming a connection between material culture and a particular biblical narrative, scholars have read into this material culture the whole story imparted by that narrative. The daily lives of the people in the Iron Age southern Levant have thus become subsumed by the historical narratives. As a result, since the 'total' history of the Iron Age southern Levant is already (perceived to be) known from the Old Testament, archaeological evidence is rarely analysed to its full potential. Any analysis that is undertaken merely focuses on classification (to assign it to the right 'archaeological culture' or indeed ethnic group) and chronology (to slot it into the right time frame for the narrative). Rarely is any attempt made at further analysis, since all necessary information is already deemed to be provided by the biblical and other historical texts. As a result, many forms of analysis are simply not carried out and a clear picture of the daily life led by Iron Age people in the southern Levant remains obscure. Indeed, Figures 29 and 30 illustrate clearly what analyses have been - and have not been - carried out on the material excavated at the (published) late Iron Age sites that form the core of this study. These types of analysis have been selected from the great quantity of analytical procedures available in archaeology today and represent the procedures that are common practice in studies of pottery and small finds from American and European sites. So, whilst highlighting what is missing in terms of analytical procedures in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, they also emphasise the possibilities of what can be done. To outline the problems for Iron Age archaeological scholarship in the southern Levant incurred by the lack of material culture analysis more clearly, two brief case studies will be presented below. The first discusses the analysis of Iron Age ceramics in the southern Levant. The second presents a survey of the topics covered by south Levantine Iron Age archaeology in articles published between 1980 and 2000 in 3 major journals of south Levantine archaeology. In addition, it discusses the analysis of Iron Age material culture from southern Jordan.

5.4.3 Case Studies

5.4.3.1 The Analysis of Iron Age Ceramics in the Southern Levant

> 'For most of the first half of this century, pottery studies were based almost exclusively on morphology and decoration. Ceramic vessels were often regarded as little more than chronological indices or cultural sign-posts symbolising the ethnic affiliation of their owners. Major stylistic variation was interpreted implicitly or explicitly as the material manifestation of a new 'culture', whilst minor adjustments in shape and decoration were seen as representing a later phase within a 'culture' zone. Intricate time scales and invasion patterns were constructed on the basis of ceramic styles. Whole empires foundered and new ones arose on a few abraded pot sherds' (Howard 1981: 1).

This is a description of the culture-historical approach to pottery studies that was standard practice in most countries at the beginning of the twentieth century. This approach also characterised the first pottery studies to be carried out on Iron Age ceramics in the southern Levant by scholars such as Albright and Wright (see Chapter 2). Indeed, since Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant was in its developmental stages at the time of Albright and Wright's work, there was an overriding concern with chronology. At a time when archaeology was firmly placed within an historical paradigm, these chronological concerns meant that changes in material culture were equated to specific historical episodes as presented in texts, to provide order through time for the excavated archaeological remains. The Aegean and the Near East were implicitly understood to be historically linked through time and so links between material culture assemblages were assumed as well. Strict typological approaches were thus needed where the emphasis was placed on creating comparable bodies of material to allow dates to be determined for material deriving from wide spatial and temporal horizons. A diffusionary model was therefore an underlying assumption supporting a master ceramic sequence. Thus the appearance of a new material culture, usually pottery, was reduced to the introduction of a new ethnic group.

Chapters 2 and 3 have shown that due to Albright and Wright's tremendous influence this approach to ceramics remained the dominant method in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology for many years. Indeed, Iron Age ceramic studies in this area are still over-ridingly concerned with pottery as a chronological and ethnic marker. Typo-chronological analyses therefore still form the vast majority of studies of south Levantine Iron Age ceramics. While this approach has its place, and has been instrumental in contributing to our initial knowledge of Iron Age ceramics, it is also problematic for a number of reasons.

Indeed, in Europe and America during the 1960s, the 'New Archaeology' movement shifted the emphasis from static description and simple induction to explanation and the study of systemic structure and change (Binford 1962; Binford and Binford 1968; Clarke 1968). They argued that;

> 'material culture can and does represent the structure of the total cultural system [...] [in which change] must be viewed in an adaptive context both social and environmental, not whimsically viewed as the result of 'influences, 'stimuli', or even 'migrations' between and among geographically defined units' (Binford 1962: 217).

Archaeologists primarily concerned with ceramics could therefore no longer make linear correlations between vessel style change and the appearance of a 'new people'. In the United States at this time, ceramicists thus began to concentrate on design analysis to identify spatial rather than chronological stylistic variation. These studies were intended to shed light on the amount of social interaction within and between communities (e.g. Deetz 1965; 1968a; 1968b; Longacre 1964; 1970). In Britain in the 1960s, the emphasis on economic explanation for patterning and change in the archaeological record generated a very different approach to ceramic studies. Indeed, techniques of fabric analysis were not entirely new to British archaeologists, but the broader questions posed by the New Archaeology provided the necessary stimulus for their development and wide-spread application (Howard 1981: 2). The definitive regional studies by David Peacock (1968; 1969a; 1969b) for example, drew attention to the potential of ceramic characterisation for demonstrating exchange contact between social groups. Since trade and exchange at this time were seen as the cornerstones of economic organisation, their elucidation through fabric and stylistic studies became the major focus of ceramic research in Britain.

These theoretical developments meant that fabric, form, and stylistic studies became standard archaeological practice in Britain and America. Many site reports of excavations undertaken in the 1970s pursued the possibilities which ceramic analyses offered for an understanding of the social and cultural context of a site (e.g. Cunliffe 1984; Sharples 1991). The pottery was not only used as the principal means of relative dating, it was also, where possible, calibrated with radiocarbon dating. The origin of the pottery and the assessment of local fabrics in relation to imported wares were also considered. In addition, technological change, the relationship between form and function, aspects of the distribution of pottery within the site, and the regional implications of the assemblage were addressed.

In America and Britain in the late 1970s dissatisfaction with the exclusive concentration on economic or social interaction led to the consideration of production systems and their organisation. This was on the basis that 'little can be said about local exchange until local production is

understood' (Rice 1987: 67). The scale of the equipment needed for production was thus assessed - wheels, kilns, specialised tools, settling tanks, and so on. The assessment of these issues lead on to questions concerning the pottery 'industry' in the local or even regional economy. These included the degree of investment required, part-time or full-time, seasonal or year-round, individual or communal, division of labour between different tasks, and so on (Orton *et al.* 1993: 23-34). Linked with distribution studies, issues such as trade could then also be addressed. The study of pottery technology thus helped to set pottery production in its social context.

The developments in ceramic studies in Britain and America from the 1960s to the present highlight a number of methodological and analytical issues that have not been addressed by south Levantine Iron Age ceramic studies. One of the most crucial of these is description of ceramic fabrics. The fabric of pottery is rarely considered in published reports of south Levantine Iron Age excavations. Indeed, most reports do not even give fabric descriptions. Fabric analysis is however crucial to the study of trade-patterns, raw material sources, production methods, and vessel function (Rice 1987). This information is vital for typological considerations as well, since the shape of a ceramic vessel may vary because of a number of different reasons other than its date, including for example its function, its geographical origin, and its clay source. Recent approaches to ceramic analysis therefore emphasise the necessity for continuous feedback between our understanding of trade-patterns, raw material sources, site formation processes, vessel function, and chronology. The latter cannot in any sense be placed in a separate box, since it is only one of the factors controlling the ceramic variation within and between sites (Orton *et al.* 1993: 23-34; Rice 1987).

Unfortunately, the lack of fabric analyses in south Levantine Iron Age ceramic studies means that it is very difficult to move beyond purely descriptive studies of Iron Age pottery in the southern Levant. Due to this situation, typo-chronological ceramic distribution maps can be produced, but it is impossible to address questions such as where the pots were produced, how they were produced, and by what mechanism they were distributed. In short, we know next to nothing about the production, consumption, and distribution mechanisms of Iron Age pottery.

Another important issue that has not been addressed in south Levantine Iron Age ceramic studies is the approach to ceramic typology. Typology is of course in all branches of archaeology still of central importance on a very fundamental level, since in practice it is one of the main tools used to create both order and direction. However, the nature of this order must be considered. Where does it come from and which factors cause the variations in the material? There seems to be a lack of insight into the relationships between the vessel, which is used in typologies in the present, and the social reality that it emerged from in the past. This is especially the case in south Levantine Iron

Age archaeology, where the lack of understanding of archaeological processes due to the reliance on textual sources means that different pottery types are simply regarded as type fossils for particular chronological periods and ethnic groups. Indeed, many south Levantine Iron Age archaeologists regard similarity between objects as essentially unproblematic and reduce it to a starting point for further inferences. Discussions of typology therefore typically treat similarities between objects in a simplistic way where similarity and order are seen as the 'natural' state of things rather than the result of behaviour and its implied significance (Sørensen 1997: 182). This view thus encompasses the idea that

> '[p]hysical similarity entails a probability of every other form of similarity, i.e. similarity in respect of time, use, name and environment. A correctly defined type corresponds to a concrete historic situation' (Malmer 1963: 264; c.f. Sørensen 1997: 182).

The aim is clearly not to understand similarity or dissimilarity, but to measure where similarity stops and dissimilarity begins. Since such similarity is not primarily based on considerations of production and decisions - in short the human practices and strategies resulting in the product - it becomes a measured, quantifiable similarity in which there is no consideration for the intentions, values and meanings which the original producers and users associated with the object (ibid.). In south Levantine Iron Age ceramic studies it is almost as if the quantitative similarity between objects is seen as *the* meaning. Similarity in itself is the value, and no room is left for the possibility that similarity is a result of what is emphasised in the production of these objects, that is the result of a practice rather than the aim *per sé*.

As a result, in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology material *knowledge* is often confused with understanding. Knowledge of the material means familiarity with an assemblage, but it does not signify understanding. The only way to come to an understanding of the material is by realising that archaeology is material research - the study of the object and the materiality of action and meaning - and that it is critical that the material form is also related to its social and cultural context.

A consideration of the social and cultural context of ceramics has thus also been a neglected field of research in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. This field of research is vital since the view of material culture as being simultaneously actively creating and passively symbolic as well as an integral component of social life, being used to express, create and transform rules of meaning, entails that the meanings of objects themselves are not coincidental or arbitrary, but rather are given by their context (see Chapter 6 for a more detailed discussion of this). As objects are re-situated in different contexts, this meaning may therefore change accordingly. It is therefore only possible to attempt to analyse the significance of south Levantine Iron Age ceramics when viewed in detail in

local contexts. In south Levantine Iron Age pottery studies, exact contexts for published vessels are often given only very selectively (e.g. Aharoni 1973a; Fritz and Kempinski 1983; Biran 1983; Beit-Arieh 1995a; 1999; Finkelstein *et al.* 2000a). In addition, only a selection of pottery is often published, no quantification of the complete ceramic assemblage is attempted, and information on the nature and location of the contexts that are given is not provided. The spatial and functional analysis of ceramic assemblages from Iron Age sites in the southern Levant is thus virtually impossible.

To conclude, it is very clear that Iron Age ceramic analysis in the southern Levant remains based on the approaches used in culture-historical archaeology. This has greatly affected the information that is recorded and published concerning Iron Age ceramic assemblages excavated in the southern Levant. Indeed, the lack of consideration of the fabric, context, function, production, distribution, deposition, and consumption of ceramics means that much of the vital information that is necessary for a consideration of the social and cultural context of south Levantine Iron Age pottery is not available. It is therefore virtually impossible to use excavated and published assemblages of Iron Age ceramics from the southern Levant for any of these current research interests.

5.4.3.2 A Survey of South Levantine Iron Age Research Foci and their Effect on the Analysis of Iron Age Material Culture from Southern Jordan

To further emphasise the problems that the lack of material culture analysis poses for south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, the results of a survey of the topics covered in articles from three major journals of south Levantine archaeology will be presented. The journals that were chosen for this survey include the British journal *Levant*, the American journal *BASOR* (Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research), and the Israeli journal *Tel Aviv*. The contents of these three journals were surveyed between the years 1980 and 2000 to try and gauge where the focus of Iron Age research lay in that period. To achieve this, articles on the Iron Age southern Levant were compared with those dealing with the Early Bronze Age by being placed into a series of different subject categories. These included for example excavation reports, typo-chronological studies, script/inscription-based studies, scientific analyses of material culture, regional comparison, and so on and so forth. The results of this survey are presented in Figures 31 and 32. These graphs clearly show that despite slight individual differences between the journals, the vast majority of the articles on Iron Age archaeology in all three journals consist of biblically-related topics, typo-chronological studies, excavation reports, and studies of script and inscriptions. The articles concerning Early Bronze Age archaeology in contrast, cover a much wider range of topics and archaeological approaches.

The survey of these journals thus clearly shows the narrow focus of the interpretation and analysis of south Levantine Iron Age material culture. As a result, the knowledge archaeologists have of the daily lives led by people in Iron Age southern Jordan has been profoundly affected. Indeed, Figures 29 and 30 paint the following rather bleak picture of the present state of archaeological knowledge of Iron Age southern Jordan as a result of fieldwork and analysis. Firstly, there is no absolute chronology for the Iron Age in southern Jordan since no scientific dating techniques have been applied (Bienkowski 1995: 41). No comprehensive information exists on the diet or economy of the people in the Iron Age since faunal and botanical analyses are lacking (apart from a brief report on Tawilan in Bennett and Bienkowski 1995). Furthermore, there is little knowledge of trade, religious practices, industry, use of space, and social structures, due to a lack of appropriate analyses. Such analyses might include residue and lipid analysis of pottery, elemental analyses using techniques such as XRF on small finds, micro-morphological studies, and petrographic analysis and NAA of pottery. Non-scientific analyses might include spatial, contextual, and functional analysis for example.

In addition, only the most basic ceramic analyses have been carried out on the excavated Iron Age pottery from southern Jordan. Although Oakeshott (1978) produced a form typology and a fabric series which most subsequent scholars have followed (apart from Pratico 1993), none of this information has been incorporated into an overall study of the patterns of association between form, fabric, and decoration. Distribution patterns and regionality of Iron Age ceramics in southern Jordan therefore remain obscure. Furthermore, complete ceramic assemblages have not been kept or recorded from any of the excavated sites and the pottery that was kept remains largely unpublished (however, from the sites that have been published not all the pottery that was kept has been published, for example Ghrareh, Khirbet Ishra, Khirbet al-Megheitah). For the two other sites that have been published - Tawilan and Tell el-Kheleifeh - poor recording methods and flooding of storage space meant that not all the pottery that was kept could be published (Pratico 1993; Bennett and Bienkowski 1995). In addition, most of these sites were excavated in a way that means that they are not always stratigraphically reconstructable. As a consequence, contextual, spatial, and functional analysis of the material culture is rendered virtually impossible. Lastly, the vast majority of studies that *have* been undertaken on south Jordanian Iron Age archaeology are of the typo-chronological kind (e.g. Oakeshott 1978; 1983; Hart 1989; Weippert 1982; Finkelstein 1992a; 1992b; Bienkowski 1992a; 2001a; Bienkowski and Sedman 2001).

As a result of using traditional archaeological methods, it is thus clear that we really know very little about the daily lives of the people living in southern Jordan during the Iron Age. As the sum of

approximately 70 years of archaeological research on the Iron Age in southern Jordan, this is a depressing result. And yet, there are a number of publications that focus on the late Iron Age in southern Jordan, indeed, that focus on aspects of the late Iron Age history of southern Jordan on the basis of archaeology (e.g. Knauf 1992; Knauf-Belleri 1995; Herr 1997). But if, as we have seen, the information derived from archaeology is so poor, then what are these publications based on? The debt to historical sources is thus clear, and the resulting obfuscation of the daily lives of Iron Age people in southern Jordan even more so. Is this really the archaeology we want for Iron Age Jordan?

5.4.4 Towards Alternative Approaches

The discussion of the methods used in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology for excavation, interpretation, and analysis, has shown that archaeological practice in the southern Levant is still determined to a large extent by the requirements of culture-history. By retaining culture-historically driven methods of interpretation and analysis, the focus has remained on typological and chronological studies. In contrast, recent archaeological theory emphasises that the only way to come to an understanding of material culture is by realising that archaeology is material research - the study of the object and the materiality of action and meaning - and that it is critical that the material form is also related to its social and cultural context.

These are issues that have become of increasing concern in archaeology since the emergence of Post-Processual theories in the early 1980s. Material culture studies have thus become more focused on the social aspects of existence. Indeed, Barrett has for example argued that too much of current archaeological research is still dedicated to writing the history of *things* (Barrett 1994: 96). This antiquarianism assumes that if the patterns of material debris are adequately recorded then, by using the correct methodological devices, the people will somehow emerge from behind the material (ibid.). Time and space are simply used as descriptive parameters, to define chronological sequences and spatial distributions. However, the chronological and the spatial distribution of things must be situated in the time-space contexts of those practices which generated them (ibid.). The premise Barrett wishes to emphasise, is that archaeologists must conceptualise their material evidence, not as an external trace or record of a type of society, but as the medium of social practice (Barrett 1994: 35).

There are however some prerequisites for carrying out such research. Firstly, archaeological contexts are of vital importance. This is because the view of material culture as an integral component of social life, being used to express, create, and transform rules of meaning, entails that the meanings of objects themselves are not coincidental or arbitrary, but rather are given by their

context. As objects are re-situated in different contexts, this meaning may therefore change accordingly. It is therefore only possible to attempt to analyse the significance of south Levantine Iron Age material culture when viewed in detail in its local contexts. Unfortunately, the way in which Iron Age sites in the southern Levant are excavated, recorded, and interpreted means that it is exactly this contextual information that is lost. The current non-contextual methods of excavation in the southern Levant are therefore impracticable for today's archaeology, which is increasingly concerned with a more sociological and holistic approach to the archaeological record (Johnson 1989). If alternative interpretations of the Iron Age southern Levant are to be possible, current methods of excavation, recording, and analysis will have to be reassessed and brought in line with current theoretical and methodological thinking to avoid the perpetuation of generalised assumptions that have been shown to be problematic.

5.5 Publication Practices in South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology

5.5.1 The Lack of Publication of Iron Age Excavations

Added to the theoretical and methodological problems with south Levantine Iron Age archaeological practice, the lack of publication of excavated sites poses a huge problem. Since the publication of excavation results is integral to the promotion of archaeological knowledge, publication practices form an important and much neglected subject that requires discussion. Indeed, not a single south Levantine Iron Age site excavated by an American archaeologist since World War II has been fully published (Magness-Gardiner 1996: 179). Many Israeli excavations have not produced full publications either. The almost total lack of publication of excavation results in recent years is demonstrated by a series of tables drawn up by Herzog in a recent article (Herzog 1996: 95-99; see Figures 33-36). A number of scholars in the past have also highlighted this spectacular dearth - albeit in a less comprehensive way - but the problem still remains largely ignored (e.g. Rainey 1975; Bar-Yosef and Mazar 1982; Ussishkin 1982a; Stern 1987; 1996). In fact, as the title of Herzog's article indicates 'With Time, We're Getting Worse' (Herzog 1996).

So what are the reasons for the current situation? A great number of different explanations are given for the lack of publication, such as the competence of the project director, lack of money, lack of time, the sheer amount of data that needs to be processed, the time it takes for experts to complete reports, and the growing number of analyses to incorporate and thus growing numbers of experts to consult (Stern 1996; Ben-Tor 1996; Herzog 1996). It might be argued however, that the root of the publication problem lies not with 'physical' issues such as money, methods, and time, but with deeper epistemological issues, such as why a site is being excavated, what the scholars in question

are hoping to learn from the excavation, how and when the excavated material evidence will be analysed, how long it will take, and how and when the material will be presented to other scholars. Only by incorporating such questions into research designs from the beginning, and by carefully budgeting the expense of such activities, will the problems with publication be resolved.

Indeed, the oft-cited problem of a lack of money and time is only a problem if budgeting and time planning were not part of the overall project aims from the very beginning. It is not the lack of money or time that is stopping publication (since there is obviously a willingness to continue funding large-scale excavations for many years at a time), it is the lack of incorporation of this type of post-excavation processing, analysis, and publication into the overall project and budget strategy. Most of the problems mentioned above could thus be effectively addressed by incorporating the full archaeological sequence of excavation, processing, analysis, and publication into the overall project strategy and budget.

A very important issue that lies at the heart of the publication problem has been highlighted by Herzog. In recent years Israeli archaeologists have been adopting scientific methods within their excavation projects based on the ideas propounded by the New Archaeology movement. However, Herzog points out that this has happened without a full understanding or acceptance of the theory behind it (Herzog 1996: 105). As a result, he suggests that

> '[t]he archaeologist who is not aware of the significance of the finds for the reconstruction required by social archaeology finds himself flooded by huge quantities of material that he doesn't know what to do with. The inevitable result: Boxes and sacks of animal bones, as well as other primarily unprocessed excavation material, fill storage houses' (ibid.).

Moreover, when finds *are* delivered to specialists, Herzog emphasises that they remain detached from their archaeological context or are published as an unrelated appendix to the archaeological report. This situation has inevitably caused delays in publication (ibid.).

Furthermore, it might be argued that the accepted practice of publishing only part of an excavation's findings in a preliminary report, rather than as complete data in a full report, is accepted exactly for the reasons highlighted by Herzog. As he points out, and was shown in Chapters 2, 3, and above, south Levantine archaeology still continues to emphasise traditional typological and chronological studies of material culture, with a focus on the relationship between material culture and historical sources. Where scientific methods *have* been adopted, it has been done without a full understanding or acceptance of the theory behind them. Without this understanding, this information is not necessarily seen as very meaningful, and therefore the lack of publication is not deemed quite as

detrimental. If the main aim is to fit excavated material into a pre-existing historical framework, and the historical conclusions have been reached by adequately relating the pottery typologically to other assemblages, therefore enabling the site to be slotted into its rightful chronological and historical niche, then a detailed publication becomes less valuable. Therefore, concerning this type of archaeological aim, it might be suggested that following the attribution of finds to a stratum and the dating of the stratum by typological parallels, there is little more to be said, therefore making any further publication of results unnecessary. The result is thus a vicious circle which is very difficult to break. However, an initial step towards breaking this cycle would be to only fund projects if a research design which incorporates a budget and time planning from the very start - regardless of the project director's theoretical stance - has been included.

5.5.2 The Structure of Archaeological Reports

The construction of archaeological inquiry is largely governed by the method of publication of archaeological sites. At present, a common pattern of post-excavation activity is to divide the excavated artifacts into what are now well-established categories. Each category is then assigned to a different 'finds specialist' for organisation into a typology. The categories are largely selected on criteria attributable to the formal or manufacturing characteristics of the artifacts. It is often overlooked however, that the pre-determined categories into which excavation 'finds' are inevitably placed are based on the categorisation system employed by scientists of the nineteenth century, and that it has been employed to facilitate the job of the archaeologist in organising his/her data (Allison 1997: 78). However, it is not always evident how or when s/he might use the material organised in this way to aid the reconstruction of past life (Adams and Adams 1991: 276). Such methods and publication formats undoubtedly allow the development of more specialised knowledge of each of the categories of excavated artefacts. They may even have the potential to eventually tell us more about past actuality, but in the meantime they have an enormous effect on the construction of archaeological inquiry (Allison 1997: 78). It appears that these categories of excavated material have become ends in themselves, rather than conceptual tools 'made for a purpose and [which] must be shown to work for that purpose' (Adams and Adams 1991: 14).

Furthermore, a large proportion of archaeological excavations are of settlement sites, and the associated artefacts are usually found at their place of consumption, or end-use, rather than their place of manufacture. The present form of publication divides artefacts into categories that do not reflect this, thus hindering the study of past activities on site. Indeed, as Figures 29 and 30 in section 5.4 showed, small finds and pottery are often not published according to their find context. Locus and stratum numbers are often cited, but it is very difficult to work backwards from that

information to a comprehensive record of what was found where, and with what. In addition, complete assemblages are often not published, so that even if a scholar were to group the material together by context him/herself, (s)he could never be sure that (s)he had all the material that was retrieved from that particular area. Moreover, due to poor publication of plans and the lack of lists and descriptions of loci, (s)he could not even be sure that (s)he had information on all the loci that were excavated and what their relationship to each other was. Added to this is the problem that a locus is not necessarily meaningful stratigraphically and that therefore, even if (s)he had all the information at his/her disposal, a true record of the nature of a deposit would still not be available. This means that for most published south Levantine Iron Age sites it is very difficult indeed to reconstruct an excavated area, since most of the information is simply not available in published form. The information selected by the excavator is often all that is available to future researchers, but as research aims and questions might differ between scholars, this information is not sufficient.

Not only are objects divided and analysed by their manufacture or the material they consist of, the analyses of those objects are often included as appendices at the back of a report. Rarely are the results from those analyses incorporated into the overall interpretation of the site (examples include the reports on Tel 'Ira, Horvat Qitmit, Beersheba, and Megiddo). Herzog's point that many projects do now include a variety of analyses, but without the director necessarily understanding their use or value, is again relevant here.

5.5.3 Summary

The factors involved in the delay of publication, and the form that publications take when excavations *are* published, stem from a similar root. Only a re-evaluation of the goals of the discipline of archaeology can overcome the problems with both of these issues. As long as the discovery of finds represents a goal in itself, rather than a means to an end, this crisis cannot be overcome. Only an awareness of the theoretical changes that have taken place, and are taking place, in the discipline of archaeology as a whole, will allow for the adoption of appropriate research tools. A social and more holistic archaeology means that contextual methods of publication, the integration of analyses into overall site interpretation, and comprehensive publication are required. Failure to publish and inadequate publication give the excavator an advantage over his colleagues whenever there is room for alternative explanations. Without full and adequate publication of the data, it is not possible to test interpretations or produce new and/or additional ones. This severely debilitates the subject and harms the professional integrity of the discipline.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how the historical framework of Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant has largely determined the methods used to excavate, analyse, interpret, and publish archaeological remains from the Iron Age southern Levant. Indeed, the discussion of these methods has demonstrated that archaeological practice in this region is still dominated by culture-historical concerns. By retaining culture-historically driven methods of interpretation and analysis, the focus has remained on typological and chronological studies. In contrast, recent archaeological theory emphasises that the only way to come to an understanding of material culture is by realising that archaeology is material research - the study of the object and the materiality of action and meaning - and that it is critical that the material form is also related to its social and cultural context. Due to the methods used in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, the wide range of information concerning the daily lives led by people in the past produced by these recent developments, is largely lacking and difficult to attain.

By discussing past and present approaches in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology to excavation, analysis, interpretation, and publication, it has also been demonstrated how these approaches in turn determine the research agenda and interpretative universe of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. In other words, the historical concerns of Iron Age archaeology in this area have not only determined the methods used to study archaeological remains, but the methods themselves condition the approach taken to archaeological evidence. In recent critical studies that have questioned particular interpretations, the idea that the methods used to excavate and analyse the material evidence direct those interpretations, remains unexplored. These methods are still regarded as objective and unbiased. It is because of such ideas about the impartial and objective nature of the archaeological methods used in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, that their role in determining current understandings of the Iron Age archaeology of this area has remained unquestioned. However, as this chapter has clearly shown, current archaeological practices in the southern Levant are far from being neutral and blameless. They are in fact deeply implicated in present understandings in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology of the nature of material culture and its role in peoples' lives. As such, it is the methods used to excavate, analyse, interpret, and publish - in addition to the theoretical approaches discussed in Chapters 2 to 4, as well as the following Chapter 6 - that direct current interpretations of the Levantine Iron Age.

CHAPTER SIX

Material Culture and Identity: Archaeological Theory and Ethnicity

6.1 Introduction

Following the historiography of research on Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant in Chapters 2 and 3, this chapter will begin by emphasising how material culture has previously been interpreted and why these approaches might be questionable on theoretical grounds. Following this, the primary aim of this chapter is to show that there are alternative ways of understanding human social life and the social role of material culture. Indeed, it is possible to see the major theoretical movements in archaeology (culture history, processualism, post-processualism) as alternative means of understanding the relationship between people and the physical/material world. Highlighting these interpretational trends - which have influenced south Levantine archaeology to a greater or lesser extent - is an important part of the present study since it demonstrates that, depending on the questions asked of archaeological remains and the methods used to interpret them, it is possible to produce different understandings of the past. Our understandings of archaeological phenomena are therefore, to some degree, subjective and contingent. The alternative understanding of the relationship between people and material culture proposed in this study will be based largely on approaches usually referred to as theories of practice or structuration. These approaches and their implications for archaeological practice will be discussed towards the end of this chapter.

My aim in this chapter is to show that, although ideas such as ethnicity and population movement may appear to be fundamental to south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, alternative understandings of the available evidence are nonetheless possible. Indeed, these ideas will be used as the basis for re-examining the actual archaeological evidence in Chapters 7, 8, and 9. The theoretical ideas presented in this chapter therefore have important implications for how archaeologists identify and understand the Iron Age in southern Israel and Jordan.

6.2 Background: Approaches to Material Culture and Identity in South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology

6.2.1 Nineteenth Century Nationalism

The study of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology started when nationalist and racial theories were beginning to influence academic and popular thought in the late nineteenth century. In this intellectual context, archaeologists had little reason to doubt their ability to link, very directly and unambiguously, national/racial groups (e.g. Israelites, Edomites, Philistines etc.) to artefacts believed to have been made and used by those people(s). Indeed, the attachment of an identity to particular objects or monuments, most frequently expressed in terms of the ethnic group or 'people' who produced them, had figured at the heart of archaeological enquiry from the Renaissance period onwards (Hides 1996: 25-47; Jones 1997a: 15). It was however especially the spread of nationalism during the nineteenth century that caused an escalation of interest in archaeological remains, and in particular to tracing their national or ethnic ancestry (Díaz-Andreu and Champion 1996; Díaz-Andreu 1996; Sklenár 1983; Trigger 1989).

Throughout the nineteenth century in Europe and the late nineteenth century in the Near East, chronological and spatial frameworks - such as the Three Age System in Europe and Petrie's work in Palestine (see Chapter 2) - were beginning to be constructed on the basis of local artifactual material. A direct 'ethno-historical' method was developed; the attempt to trace particular groups of people back into prehistory on the basis of find associations and horizons starting from a point where their presence could be documented by the synchronisation of archaeological and historical sources (Sklenár 1983: 91). Indeed, historical sources were very significant since they were originally taken as the basis for a link between peoples and archaeological finds (Shennan 1991: 29). Through this link, these groups of archaeological finds - or what came to be known as 'cultures' - were regarded as actors on the historical stage, playing the role prescribed for them by documentary history (Shennan 1989a: 5). By the beginning of the twentieth century such interests had become explicitly formulated in the methodological principle that archaeological culture areas reflect past 'peoples' or ethnic groups, as in the work of archaeologists such as Gustav Kossinna (1911) and Vere Gordon Childe (1929) (Jones 1997a: 15).

6.2.2 Culture-Historical Archaeology

Kossinna was one of the first to define and systematically apply the concept of an archaeological culture in conjunction with the 'direct ethno-historical' method in his book *Die Herkunft der*

Germanen (1911) (Jones 1997a: 16). His 'settlement archaeology' was based on the idea that 'in all periods, sharply delineated archaeological culture areas coincide with clearly recognisable peoples or tribes' (c.f. Childe 1956: 28). Cultures were defined on the basis of material culture traits associated with sites in a particular region, at a particular time, and it was assumed that cultural continuity indicated ethnic continuity.

It is however the early English-language work of Childe (1925, 1929) that has come to be regarded as the defining moment in the establishment of culture-historical archaeology, and the development of the culture concept in the sense of the distinctive ways of life of discrete groups of people (Daniel 1978: 247; Trigger 1980: 40, 43). Childe defined the concept of an archaeological 'culture' as 'certain types of remains - pots, implements, ornaments, burial rites, house forms - constantly recurring together' (Childe 1929: v-vi). This led to narratives of the succession of such cultures within a particular area, or the movement of 'cultures' from one area to another. Change in archaeological culture was usually interpreted as resulting from either 'diffusion' (the spread of cultural forms but not necessarily of people), migration (where the appearance of new cultural forms in a region represented the immigration of new people 'bearing' that culture), or invasion.

Although Childe was one of the first to produce a synthesis of European prehistory based on the systematic application of the culture concept, its use was fairly commonplace in European archaeological literature of the early twentieth century (Jones 1997a: 16). The definition of culture areas became the principal means by which European (pre)history was delineated in space and time. This produced a mosaic of peoples and cultures, as expressed in maps, tables and charts (see Figure 37).

Although south Levantine archaeology in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century also resulted in culture-historical interpretations of the past, this was the product of a slightly different intellectual development. Initially, the Old Testament provided the historical evidence for the existence of particular ethnic groups with which find associations and horizons were synchronised. A direct ethno-historical method was thus applied. The earliest clear example of this is provided by Petrie's work at Tell el-Hesi, followed closely by Bliss and Macalister's work at the same site. Indeed, while Petrie paved the way, the first culture-historical synthesis in south Levantine archaeology was based on Bliss and Macalister's work at Tell el-Hesi (1902). They defined a number of successive periods or stages at Tell el-Hesi, including the 'Early Pre-Israelite', the 'Late Pre-Israelite', the 'Jewish', and the 'Seleucid'. Their separation of Tell el-Hesi's archaeological deposits into distinct strata was based on the predominance of pottery types related to ethnic groups in each. This culture-historical scheme represented an important step in the development of the

concept of an archaeological culture in the southern Levant. Indeed, this framework was used and later elaborated by Schumacher and Reisner (see Chapter 2).

However, in contrast to European culture-historical archaeology at the time, a specialised terminology was developed in preference to the term 'culture'. Although a clear definition of the entities defined by this terminology was not explicitly formulated anywhere in the literature, it is clear from early site publications that these categories constituted formal cultural units, rather than just chronological stages, and were assumed to represent past peoples, or groups of closely related peoples. Moreover, in comparison to European culture-historical archaeology, south Levantine archaeology - like American archaeology - tended to be dominated by a concern with typological and chronological detail. This was in contrast to European archaeology at the time which was characterised by more ambitious culture-historical reconstruction and the investigation of past ways of life (Willey and Sabloff 1974: 88-130).

Despite these differences however, the systematic use of cultural units for the classification of archaeological data in the southern Levant became firmly established. Furthermore, classificatory schemes such as those developed by Bliss and Macalister ultimately contributed to the definition of a mosaic of cultures defined in space and time in a similar manner to European culture-history. Indeed, these methods became so firmly entrenched that even today maps of 'culture areas' form the basis of archaeologists' understanding of the Iron Age southern Levant (see Figures 38-40). Although the development of archaeology in Europe and the Near East progressed along slightly different lines, the culture-historical paradigm, in one form or another, ultimately became the dominant framework for archaeological analysis in both of these areas in the first half of the twentieth century.

6.2.3 Processual and Post-Processual Archaeology

The position of culture-history as the dominant paradigm in European and North American archaeology came under attack by the establishment of processual or 'New Archaeology', with its conceptualisation of culture as a system, and its emphasis on the functionalist explanation of social process and cultural evolution. Archaeologists in the 1960s became increasingly concerned with how and why cultural change occurred, rather than the largely descriptive exercise of culture-historical archaeology which traced what happened in prehistory in terms of cultures and their movements (e.g. Willey and Phillips 1958: 5-6).

As part of their attack on culture-historical archaeology, the new archaeologists criticised the normative concept of culture; the idea that within a given group cultural practices and beliefs tend to conform to prescriptive ideational norms or rules of behaviour. On the basis of this conception it had been assumed that bounded, homogenous cultural entities correlated with particular peoples, ethnic groups, tribes, and/or races. Furthermore, such a conceptualisation of culture assumed that culture was made up of a set of shared ideas or beliefs, which were maintained by regular interaction within the group, and the transmission of shared cultural norms to subsequent generations through the process of socialisation, which purportedly resulted in a continuous cumulative cultural tradition (Jones 1997a: 24). Instead, the New Archaeologists argued that culture constituted an integrated system, made up of different functioning sub-systems, and as a corollary archaeological remains had to be regarded as the product of a variety of past processes, rather than simply a reflection of ideational norms (Binford 1962, 1965; Clarke 1978). Culture was conceptualised as an adaptive mechanism, and a variety of functionalist-oriented ecological and neo-evolutionary approaches were developed with the aim of analysing various dimensions of past socio-cultural systems.

However, processual archaeology, despite its critique of the idea that all variation in distributions of material culture can be understood in terms of the ideational norms of past ethnic groups, also continued to accept the idea that some bounded archaeological distributions, if only in the domain of stylistic variation, correlated with such groups (Conkey 1991: 10; Shennan 1989a: 18; Jones 1997a: 108). Indeed, whilst social archaeology was committed to the explanation of settlement systems, trade networks, social ranking, political systems and ideology, the traditional culture unit survived as the basic unit of description and classification, inevitably shadowed by the implicit connotation of a corresponding social or ethnic group, even where such a correlation was criticised (Jones 1997a: 27). Thus, although there was less emphasis on defining ethnic groups and their movements, there was still believed to be a close relationship between material culture and social identity.

That was certainly the case when processual approaches eventually found their way into south Levantine Iron Age archaeology in the 1970s and 1980s. Although the use of scientific analytical techniques became more widespread, as well as some of the terminology of processualism, the general interpretive framework of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology never really changed (Dever 1981: 15-18). Like other archaeologies in the field of historical archaeology, the existence of historical references to specific ethnic groups resulted in the unquestioned perpetuation of the 'ethnic labelling' of sites and objects. Straightforward correlations between particular forms and styles of material culture and particular ethnic groups thus continued to dominate south Levantine

Iron Age archaeology to the end of the twentieth century. Indeed, as one of the most recent publications attempting to synthesise the archaeology of the Palaeolithic to Ottoman periods in the southern Levant from an explicit processual standpoint (Levy 1995a: x-xvi; Harrison 2000: 87), Levy's *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land* (1995b) shows that the approaches to Iron Age archaeology are still dominated by an equation between material culture and ethnic groups. A clear example of this is provided by the following quote from Finkelstein's article on the Iron Age I in Levy's volume;

> 'when studying the emergence of the proto-Israelite and other Iron I groups, one is left with no other alternative than to 'impose' the territorial distribution of these people in the Iron Age II, as revealed by reliable historical texts, on the settlement patters of Iron I' (Finkelstein 1995: 365).

In Holladay's article on the Iron Age IIA-B, although any explicit discussion of ethnic identity and the material culture of this period is eschewed, the Iron Age IIA-B archaeology of the southern Levant is referred to as 'Israelite' throughout (Holladay 1995: 368-398). Indeed, he refers to '[t]he causes of the Israelite transformation from acephalous agriculturalism to nation-state' (ibid.: 376), 'Israelite settlement patterns in the Beersheba-Zered Depression' (ibid.: 383), '[t]he impact of nationhood upon the Israelite family' (ibid.: 386), '[t]he Israelite house' (ibid.: 387), and 'Israelite agrarian society' (ibid.: 391). This ethnic designation clearly does not result from an interpretation of the archaeological evidence alone, but stems from a reading of the Bible. By far the clearest indication of the fact that material culture and ethnic groups are still unquestioningly linked in Iron Age south Levantine archaeology is provided by Dever's article in Levy's volume (Dever 1995c: 416-431). Indeed, he states that;

> 'Ethnic consciousness [...] is often thought to be difficult or even impossible to trace in the archaeological record, but that is not necessarily the case. Artifacts may be considered properly the 'material correlates of behavior', that is, they reflect patterns of both individual and social behavior, as well as the thought and intent that behavior expresses. In that sense, archaeological remains are indeed an index not merely to material culture, but to culture, indeed to a *particular* culture. And when there emerge consistent, distinctive regional patterns - i.e., archaeological 'assemblages' - we can compare and contrast these with other such assemblages in order to isolate what may be called an archaeological culture [...]. Finally, if we happen to possess literary texts that are sufficiently detailed and can be closely correlated with such an archaeological culture and its development over time, then we may be able legitimately to attach a specific ethnic label' (ibid.: 420-421).

It is worth pointing out that Dever has been the most vociferous proponent of the use of processual theory in Iron Age south Levantine archaeology since the 1970s (see Chapter 5). It is thus clear that despite the limited adoption of processual approaches, the culture-historical interpretive framework of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology remained in place well into the 1990s.

Meanwhile, in the early 1980s in Europe, dissatisfaction with processual methods and theories contributed to the emergence of 'post-processual' archaeology. These approaches have had very little impact on south Levantine Iron Age archaeology however. Moreover, post-processual critiques in general have not, for the most part, been associated with a reconsideration of the interpretation of ethnicity in archaeology, focusing instead largely on symbolic and ideological systems (Jones 1997a: 28). As a result, the assumption of an intrinsic link between artefacts and peoples has not been called into question. Instead the problems with defining groups and their relationship to material culture has been attributed to the complexity and incompleteness of the artefactual record, or to the problems of deriving an appropriate interpretative method (Hides 1996: 26).

To summarise, despite the changes in the theoretical framework of archaeological research in the twentieth century, the fundamental assumption until recently was still - explicitly or otherwise - that there is a direct and discernible relationship between the material culture found by archaeologists and used by people in the past, and the identities held by those past individuals. Shennan (1991: 31) has summarised this idea in the equation 'culture = people'. Since the late 1980s however, these ideas have been called into question. Studies by Shennan (1989a; 1991) and Jones (1997a) for example, have thoroughly undermined many of the assumptions underlying the instrinsic link made between artifacts and people in archaeology. These studies have had little impact on south Levantine Iron Age archaeology however, where the 'culture = people' equation has remained largely intact and unquestioned. Indeed, it still remains a fundamental tenet of archaeological practice in this region and is amply illustrated by a number of recent studies.

6.2.4 Approaches to Ethnicity in South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology

In addition to the articles in general archaeology that have questioned the equation made between ethnic groups and material culture, a number of articles concerned with Near Eastern archaeology specifically have fundamentally undermined this assumption (e.g. Kramer 1977; Kamp and Yoffee 1980). More recently, South Levantine Iron Age archaeologists have also attempted to tackle this issue. One of the first of these was London (1989), who, in her article on ethnic identity in the Iron Age I period, argues that it is impossible on the basis of material culture to determine the presence of either Israelites or Canaanites in the southern Levant. She argues instead that the differences in material culture are due to a difference between urban and rural lifestyles rather than ethnic identity. However, although London does briefly discuss theories of ethnicity, she does not explicitly address the relationship between material culture and identity. In addition, she unquestioningly accepts on the basis of the Old Testament narratives that the people living the highlands of Israel during the

early Iron Age were Israelites, and those in the lowlands Canaanites (London 1989: 37). Therefore, although her article decisively undercuts the simplistic view of particular material culture types as ethnic markers for Israelites and Canaanites, she still takes as self-evident that objects were produced and used by specific peoples, and that they therefore reflect those groups in some manner. Indeed, she states that

> 'The Hebrew Bible provides the names, or ethnic identification of those involved, but the details are lacking. Yet for the archaeologist, homogeneity or its absence in the material culture betrays the origin of its maker' (ibid.: 51).

And,

> 'To benefit from the information provided in the Bible requires a more precise excavation strategy that compares and contrasts rural communities in all regions of the country if we are to identify the separateness of Israelites and Canaanites' (ibid.: 52).

Also concerned with the archaeology of Iron Age I, Bunimovitz argues in his article on the 'Problems in the Ethnic Identification of the Philistine Material Culture' (1990) that the view of certain material culture types as ethnic markers for the Philistines is too simplistic. In particular he argues against the interpretation of anthropoid coffins, 'Philistine' pottery, and a number of shrines as evidence of the presence of Philistines in the Iron Age southern Levant (Bunimovitz 1990: 212-216). However, based on the Old Testament narratives and Egyptian texts, Bunimovitz unquestioningly accepts the presence of Philistines in the early Iron Age southern Levant. In addition, he does not specifically address concepts of ethnicity and the relationship between material culture and identity. Although he does show that the equation made between material culture and 'Philistine' ethnicity is not straightforward and unproblematic, he still fundamentally believes there is a connection between types of material evidence and ethnicity. Indeed, in his conclusion he states that

> 'we must attempt to redefine the "Philistine material culture" [and] concentrate [...] on the first phases of Philistine settlement in its heartland, for only in that way will it be possible to isolate the original Philistine assemblage from the cultural environment surrounding it. [...] After their settlement in Canaan, the Philistines underwent a process of assimilation, of the kind that affects all "ethnic" subcultures. For a time such subcultures *continue to be identified by their traditional attributes and artifacts*, but eventually they lose coherence as an identifiable entity. [...] The inevitable archaeological outcome of this situation was the disappearance of the original Philistine cultural assemblage' (ibid.: 218-219; emphasis added).

The problem of ethnicity and the 'Israelites' in the Iron Age I period was addressed again in 1993 by Dever in his article 'Cultural Continuity, Ethnicity in the Archaeological Record, and the Question of Israelite Origins'. In this study, Dever argues that the Iron Age I material culture of the

highlands in Israel can be clearly identified as ethnically 'Israelite', thereby demonstrating his adherence to the 'culture = people' equation. Indeed, he writes that

> 'In 12th century Canaan, there *did* exist, at least on the highland frontier, a new ethnic entity, which we can recognize in the archaeological remains, and which we can distinguish from other known ethnic groups such as 'Canaanites' and 'Philistines' (Dever 1993b: 24).

Furthermore, concerning the material evidence from the later Iron Age, he writes that

> 'Despite our uncertainty as to the full content of the term, these 12th-11th century ethnic Israelites [...] possessed an overall material culture that led directly on into the true, full-blown Iron Age culture of the Israelite Monarchy [...] That cultural continuity alone would entitle us to regard these Iron I villagers as the authentic progenitors of later biblical 'Israel' (ibid.: 24).

This article is closely related to a number of other articles which Dever has written in which he expresses similar views. Indeed, he follows the same line of argument in 'How to tell a Canaanite from an Israelite' (1992), 'Ceramics, Ethnicity, and the Question of Israel's Origins' (1995a), and 'Will the Real Israel Please Stand Up? Archaeology and Israelite Historiography: Part I' (1995b). In his article 'Ceramics, Ethnicity, and the Question of Israel's Origins' (1995a) for example, Dever discusses five characteristics of the Iron Age settlements in the highlands of central Israel which he identifies as ethnic markers. These include settlement type and distribution, the economy of this region, demographic trends, structure and settlement layout, and technological change (Dever 1995a: 208). It is thus clear that Dever believes in a straightforward connection between material culture and ethnicity.

Finkelstein's 'Pots and People Revisited: Ethnic Boundaries in the Iron Age I' (1997a) also discusses the problems with the ethnic 'Israelite' identification of pottery and architecture in particular. The main focus of the article is however on faunal assemblages and foodways, and their relationship to ethnicity. The analysis of faunal assemblages from a range of sites from both high- and lowland locations, revealed that in the Late Bronze Age the ratios of the types of animals that were being consumed was relatively similar. In the Iron I period however, the consumption of pork appeared to cease in the highlands, while it continued at sites in the lowlands (Finkelstein 1997a: 228-229). On the basis of these results, Finkelstein concludes that

> 'Regardless of the factors that may influence pig distribution [...], this seems to mean that the taboo on pigs was already practiced in the hill country in the Iron I [...] food taboos, more precisely, pig taboos, are emerging as the main, if not only, avenue that can shed light on ethnic boundaries in the Iron I. This may be the most valuable tool for the study of ethnicity of a given, single Iron I site' (ibid.: 230).

Moreover, the conclusion to Finkelstein's study reveals that despite his reservations concerning the identification of ethnic groups through material remains other than pig bones, he still fundamentally equates material culture types with peoples. Indeed, he writes that

> 'The material culture of Palestine in the Iron I is not rich enough to allow the drawing of clear ethnic boundaries. [...] It took centuries until distinctive national or ethnic material culture developed. They seem to have been evolved with the rise of complex political systems and were influenced by the growing conflicts between the emerging polities. In the case of early Israel, most 'ethnic' features in the material culture developed and were introduced by the monarchy' (ibid.)

Interestingly, the scholars who undertook the faunal analyses on which Finkelstein bases his conclusions have attacked his views. Indeed, they thoroughly undermine his argument by stating that

> 'If the absence of pig bones in an Iron Age archaeological site is taken as diagnostic for the presence of ethnic Israelites, there were a lot more Israelites in the ancient world than we ever suspected. Beginning sometime late in the second millennium BCE in a wide swath from Anatolia to southern Mesopotamia, from Persia to the Mediterranean, Yahweh's devotees abounded in almost every village and town, swamping the few populations of pork eating non-Israelites still holding out in widely scattered communities. If this sounds unbelievable, it is, but it also reflects the uncritical interpretation biblical historians, theologians, and archaeologists have loaded onto reports of pig bone finds' (Wapnish and Hesse 1997: 238).

They go on to argue that '[z]ooarchaeology cannot produce a catalog of ethnic index fossils [since] the linkage between all types of social identities and material culture items is simply too complex for such a straightforward methodology' (ibid.: 239). Wapnish and Hesse's article continues in this vein, thereby constituting one of the few articles to provide an in depth discussion of concepts of ethnicity and their relationship to material culture. Indeed, their article provides the only detailed discussion of anthropological theories of ethnicity in the context of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, covering both primordial and instrumentalist, and objectivist and subjectivist approaches (ibid.: 253-260).

It is clear from this brief survey of articles written by south Levantine Iron Age scholars concerning the relationship between ethnicity and material culture, that archaeological practice in this region is still dominated by the 'culture = people' equation. Furthermore, it must be emphasised that these studies represent the small number of scholars actively engaged with the theoretical and methodological issues concerning this assumption. Apart from these articles there have been few other attempts to explicitly discuss the relationship between ethnicity and material culture in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. Indeed, in the majority of studies the assumption that there is an intrinsic link between artefacts and peoples has not been called into question. In recent studies concerning the late Iron Age for example, material culture types are still equated with particular

ethnic groups. Indeed, Singer-Avitz's (1999) recent article concerning the different pottery styles found at Beersheba equates these with various ethnic groups (see Chapter 3). In addition to the articles from Levy's edited volume (1995b) cited above, Kletter's recent work on Judaean pillar figurines as evidence of Judah's national/ethnic borders (1996; 1999); Herr's synthesis of the Iron Age II in which he discusses the 'national material characteristics' of Judah, Israel, and Edom (1997); and recent interpretations of 'Edomite' pottery as an ethnic marker (Mazar 1985; Bartlett 1989; Beit-Arieh 1995a; 1999; Cohen and Yisrael 1995) all clearly demonstrate that the equation between material culture and ethnicity remains a fundamental premise of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology.

6.3 Theories of Ethnicity

The 'culture = people' equation (Shennan 1991: 31) thus remains a key element in the interpretation of Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant. Indeed, archaeologists have claimed to be able to identify particular groups described in the Bible on the basis of a particular theoretical understanding of human social groupings and identity - now usually referred to as ethnicity - which has remained consistent. The aim of this section is therefore to define how ethnicity has been understood in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology in the past, and why, in the light of current aproaches, such ideas must be reassessed.

6.3.1 Race and Culture

Concepts such as 'ethnic', 'race', 'tribe', and 'culture' do not reflect universal and unchanging divisions of humanity. Quite the reverse, they represent specific, historically contingent ways of looking at the world (Jones 1997a: 40). Indeed, the early nineteenth century saw a re-emergence of interest in human diversity, and consequently the classification of human groups (ibid.). Before that, there was 'no real notion of culture as the constituting medium of different worlds' (Stocking 1987: 19). The early nineteenth century therefore marks a significant shift in the study of humanity with the emergence of the idea that human groups were essentially distinct, primordial entities, characterised by specific physical and linguistic qualities (Jones 1997a: 42-43).

These ideas provided the basis of racial theory, although there continued to be considerable disagreement about the nature of race during the nineteenth century (ibid: 41-45; Graves-Brown 1996; Hides 1996; Jones and Graves-Brown 1996). With the emergence of Romantic nationalism in the early nineteenth century however, the idea that race and nation naturally coincided with one another became widely accepted, as well as the notion that nations should represent a homogenous

racial-cum-national unit (Hannaford 1996: 235). The products of human labour - material culture - were also believed to define race (Hides 1996: 37). In many European countries archaeology thus became part of the process of racial/national self-definition. Archaeology was therefore seen to both identify distinct human groups and provide them with the legitimacy of a long history (Díaz-Andreu and Champion 1996: 18-19).

Although the concept of race was still an important one, the explicit use of racial theory gave way in the early twentieth century to the study of 'cultures' (Jones 1997a: 45-47). The classification of peoples on a cultural rather than a racial basis therefore developed as a result of the concern with the study of culture and society, as opposed to the study of the physical, so-called racial divisions of the human species (ibid.: 45). 'Cultures' came to be seen as organised and patterned ways of life of particular peoples. This conception of culture rejected the idea of unilinear evolution favoured in racial theories in preference of an emphasis on cultural contacts and diffusion. It is in this context of interest in the geographical and historical dimensions of cultural variation and the conceptual framework it provided, that archaeologists began to classify spatial variation using the culture concept (Daniel 1978: 242; Trigger 1989: 150-5). Both Kossinna and later Childe, used archaeological remains to define more closely the spatial and temporal extent of distinct cultural groups, as well as the movements of those groups (Jones 1997a: 47).

The details of how south Levantine Iron Age archaeologists applied racial and cultural approaches to their evidence have been outlined above and in Chapter 2. The discussion of Petrie, Bliss, Macalister, Thiersch, and Albright's work have illustrated this in particular. Furthermore, it was shown how, in spite of an increasingly critical academic climate, their ideas, for example the notion of large scale, distinct ethnic groups that can be identified by archaeological remains, have remained largely intact to the present. In order to reassess these approaches it is necessary to first look in more detail at the question of ethnicity itself and how social scientists have discussed this identity in recent years.

6.3.2 Anthropological Approaches to Ethnicity

In the 1950s and 1960s the concept of ethnicity emerged as a taxanomic category in the classification of peoples (Jones 1997a: 51-55). Indeed, by the late 1960s and 1970s there was a surge of interest in the phenomenon of 'ethnicity'. This development occurred across a number of disciplines, principally anthropology, sociology and psychology. This was partly stimulated by a theoretical shift away from the fixed reified categories of 'race', 'culture', 'society', and 'tribe' towards a processual analysis of ethnicity as a form of social interaction (ibid.: 55). Yet other

factors were also involved, including the demise of colonialism, and the establishment of independent nation-states in regions previously under colonial rule, which created new contexts for the articulation of national and ethnic identities (ibid.: 54). In addition, in western societies minority ethnic groups gained increasing power and voice in the context of the civil rights movement and a developing national and international discourse on cultural relativism and self-determination (ibid.).

The concept of 'ethnicity' is therefore a relatively new one, and interest in it has increased over the last three decades. This has led to a proliferation of theories concerning precisely how ethnicity operates in human social life. By identifying the specific context in which previous approaches to group identity arose, recent historiographical work has demonstrated that concepts such as 'tribe', 'race', or 'culture' are not value-free, natural categories (e.g. Jones 1997a; Graves-Brown 1996; Jones and Graves-Brown 1996; Hides 1996). Moreover, the idea of biologically defined races at regional or national levels as a universal given has been shown to be a value-laden, cultural construction (Graves-Brown 1996: 86-87). Identity is therefore not a static essence or universal, but a property of dynamic, living systems (ibid.: 88). Ethnicity is not given at birth, nor is it 'in the blood'; it only comes into being when it is practised as part of human social life. Various theories of ethnicity have stemmed from these ideas and have been the subject of involved debate. A short outline of the key issues will therefore be presented below.

6.3.3 Objectivist and Subjectivist Approaches

Normative approaches to group identity, such as those in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, regarded ethnic groups as being based on shared 'objective' cultural practices that existed independently of the perceptions of the individuals concerned (Jones 1997a: 57). Objectivists thus considered ethnic groups as social and cultural entities with distinct boundaries characterised by relative isolation and lack of interaction (ibid.). An objectivist perspective is thus an etic (or 'outside') perspective, which defines ethnic groups on the basis of the analyst's perception of socio-cultural differentiation. In archaeology, this resulted in the idea that such identities could simply be 'read off' from patterns of material culture or behaviour.

The ideal of objectivity has been successfully critiqued in the social sciences for the last forty years at least, and a variety of positions that acknowledge the subjectivity of research have been developed. F. Barth was the first to incorporate a 'subjective' approach to ethnicity in his book *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969b). His main aim was to explore the social dimensions of ethnic groups, especially the maintenance of ethnic boundaries, which he distinguished from the traditional investigation of isolated cultural units (Barth 1969a: 9-11). He therefore argued that

ethnic groups should be defined on the basis of the individuals' own categorisation of themselves and others. From this emic (or 'inside') perspective Barth thus showed that cultural variation was not endowed with a determining role. Indeed, he suggested that whilst 'ethnic categories take cultural differences into account, we can assume no one-to-one relationship between ethnic units and cultural similarities and differences' (ibid.: 14). Barth's approach has been widely recognised as a turning point in the anthropological analysis of ethnic groups (Jones 1997a: 60). Indeed, the definition of ethnic groups as 'self-defining systems' (Just 1989: 74) has come to dominate anthropological research.

6.3.4 Primordial and Instrumental Approaches

Two other approaches to ethnicity were also developed, approaches that dealt with the reasons for the generation and maintenance of ethnicity. The primordial approach argued that primordial bonds between individuals resulted from the givens of birth, 'blood', language, religion, territory and culture, which could be distinguished from other social ties on the basis of the 'ineffable significance attributed to ties of blood' (Shils 1957: 122; c.f. Jones 1997a: 65). Ethnic identity was thus regarded as something which was 'given' at birth, as a natural and fundamental form of identity that was part of human nature. In this view, ethnicity becomes involuntary and transcends the alliances and relationships created by particular situational interests and social circumstances (Jones 1997a: 65-72).

The opposite of this view is the instrumentalist approach. Here, ethnicity is regarded as a form of group identity embedded in the organisation of social behaviour. This view is characterised by a concern with the role of ethnicity in the mediation of social relations and the negotiation of access to economic and political resources (ibid.: 72-79). In addition, it argues that the persistence of ethnic boundaries is based on the adaptation to a particular social or ecological niche (Barth 1969a: 22-23). In this way, ethnicity is regarded as a strategy for the protection of political and economic interests, such as access to resources (ibid.; Jones 1997a: 74).

Despite their valuable contributions to the study of ethnic identity, there are problems with these approaches. Primordial approaches ignore the fluid nature of ethnic boundaries, the way in which ethnic identity is situational depending on the individual, social, and historical context. In other words, primordial explanations view the formulation of ethnic groups in a social and political vacuum. Instrumentalist approaches however, overly emphasise ethnicity as serving the purposes of interest groups, thereby ignoring that many examples of ethnicity cannot be explained in terms of

the pursuit of temporary economic and political interests. To adopt either of these views is therefore to obscure many important issues.

6.3.5 Ethnicity and Theory of Practice

A number of scholars have attempted to reconcile the opposition between primordial and instrumental perspectives by incorporating both views within a single theoretical framework. However, these attempts lack a coherent theory of human action, and they fail to address the question of how people recognise commonalities of interest underlying claims to a common identity (Jones 1997a: 82-83). The need to address the relationship between agents' perceptions of ethnicity and associated modes of interaction, and the cultural contexts and social relations in which they are embedded has therefore been emphasised by a number of scholars (ibid.: 87). Indeed, several scholars have turned to Bourdieu's theory of practice as a means to transcend the dichotomy between objectivity and subjectivity, and primordialism and instrumentalism. They have proposed a dialectical relationship between active, socially aware agents and the socio-historical contexts in which they live.

Bentley for example, has argued that ethnicity is not a passive reflection of similarities and differences in the cultural practices and structural conditions in which people are socialised, as traditional and primordial approaches assume (Bentley 1987: 25-6). Indeed, he argues that ethnicity is not - as some instrumentalist approaches imply - produced entirely in the process of social interaction in the pursuit of economic and political interests. Rather, he asserts that the construction of ethnic identity is grounded in the *habitus*, which shapes, and is shaped by, commonalities of practice (ibid.: 27-9).

Jones has echoed these ideas, but has pointed out that ethnicity is not directly congruent with either *habitus*, or the cultural practices and representations that both structure, and are structured by, the *habitus*. She emphasises that '[c]rucially, ethnic identification involves an objectification of cultural practices (which otherwise constitute subliminal modes of behaviour) in the recognition and signification of difference in opposition to others' (Jones 1997a: 128). In other words, for there to be a 'them', there has to be an 'us'. The particular form such an objectification takes is dependent on the intersection of the *habitus* with the prevailing social conditions in any given moment (ibid.). Hence, the cultural practices and representations involved in the signification of the 'same' identity may vary quantitatively as well as qualitatively in different social contexts characterised by different social conditions. Therefore there is rarely a one-to-one relationship between

representations of ethnicity and the complete range of cultural practices and social conditions associated with a particular ethnic group (ibid.). Indeed,

> 'the resulting pattern will be one of overlapping ethnic boundaries produced by context-specific representations of cultural difference, which are at once transient, but also subject to reproduction and transformation in the ongoing processes of social life' (ibid.: 129).

6.3.6 Summary

So where do these ideas leave our understanding of ethnicity? To begin with, ethnicity can no longer be regarded as a bounded, objective entity which can be easily described or observed. Ethnicity is 'of the mind'. Secondly, ethnicity is not static or universal. Since it depends on a perception of commonalities it is situational. These perceptions may alter through time, as places and individual situations change. Thirdly, ethnic identities are overlapping - they do not exist as the discrete, internally homogenous entities characterised by continuity of tradition created by traditional approaches for the purposes of analysis. As Jones (1997a: 100) has pointed out:

> '[f]rom a 'bird's eye view' the resulting pattern will be one of overlapping ethnic boundaries [...] subject to reproduction and transformation in the ongoing processes of social life'

Ethnicity is therefore context specific. A person may hold several ethnic identities, which can all be stressed at different times and in different places depending on the situation. For example, depending on who is asking, and where and when, I might claim to be Twents, Dutch, English, British, or European. This situation is further complicated by class, gender, religious, and occupational interests. With these points in mind, it is now possible to consider the relationship of ethnicity to material culture and how archaeologists might approach the question of ethnic identities.

6.4 Ethnicity and Material Culture

Ethnic identities in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology were, and still are, perceived as bounded, socio-cultural entities. This perception of ethnicity is clearly reflected in the culture-historical approach to material evidence, where bounded, monolithic cultural entities - archaeological cultures - are seen to correlate with past peoples. Of course, some of these ideas cannot simply be abandoned (ethnicity is potentially important for our understandings of the past and material culture may indeed symbolise a wide range of personal identities). However, there are significant problems with the approaches summarised above. At the heart of these problems lies the use of generalised assumptions concerning the relationship between people and material culture that are applied across time and space. The first of these assumptions, concerning the nature of ethnicity and the very

existence of bounded homogenous ethnic and cultural entities, has already been subjected to a number of important critiques above. The second assumption is concerned with the straightforward correlation of archaeological cultures with ethnic groups, and the third with the nature of archaeological distributions and cultures as classificatory entities.

6.4.1 The Correlation of Archaeological Cultures with Ethnic Groups

The question of the equivalence of archaeological cultures and past peoples was already raised within the framework of culture-history (e.g. Tallgren 1937; Taylor 1948). It was only with the emergence of processual archaeology however, that a more fundamental critique of culture-historical epistemology became widely accepted (Jones 1997a: 107). This critique rested on the recognition that archaeological distributions may reflect a diverse range of past activities and processes in addition to the ideational norms of past ethnic groups. As was pointed out above however, processual archaeology continued to accept the idea that some bounded archaeological distributions, in terms of stylistic variation for example, correlated with groups of people.

More recently however, the assumption that a one-to-one relationship exists between variation in any aspect of material culture, stylistic or otherwise, and the boundaries of ethnic groups has been questioned. Drawing on numerous anthropological and historical examples it has been shown that the relationship between variation in material culture and the expression of ethnic difference is complex (e.g. Ucko 1969; Trigger 1978; Hodder 1982a). De Corse's ethno-archaeological study in Sierra Leone for example, found that the examination of the variation in material culture of three adjacent distinct ethnic groups bore relatively little relation to the ethnic divisions (De Corse 1989: 137-139). Similarly, Hodder's study of the Kalinga reached the same conclusions (Hodder 1982a). Moreover, a number of archaeologists have followed recent anthropological and sociological theories of ethnicity in emphasising that ethnic groups are rarely a reflection of the sum total of similarities and differences in 'objective' cultural traits (e.g. Renfrew 1987; Shennan 1989a; 1991; Jones 1997a). Rather, they are self-conscious/self-defining groups, which are based on the perception of real or assumed cultural difference.

6.4.2 Archaeological Distributions and Archaeological 'Cultures'

In addition to recognising the problems concerning the relationship between ethnic entities and archaeological cultures, the very existence of archaeological cultures has been questioned. Culture-historical archaeology traditionally defined cultures or phases in monothetic terms on the basis of the presence or absence of a list of traits or types, which were often derived from the assemblages

of a 'type site' (Jones 1997a: 108). In 1968, Clarke already pointed out that 'no group of cultural assemblages from a single culture ever contains, nor ever did contain, all of the cultural artefacts' as the ideal monothetic concept implies (Clarke 1968: 36). Although Childe himself recognised this problem, he argued that it was the repeated association of a number of types which defined the group, and some of these types may be absent in some assemblages within the group, as well as present in assemblages belonging to other groups (Childe 1956: 33, 124). To preserve the ideal of a univariate cultural block however, Childe removed such untidiness by extracting the 'untidy' types from the group of 'diagnostic' types (ibid.: 124). Archaeologists have since shown that the traditional approach to the classification of cultural entities is too crude, and that more sophisticated approaches to the analysis of archaeological material reveal a much more complex structure (e.g. Hodder 1978a; Shennan 1978). Moreover, as Binford argued, culture-historical classification was based on the degree to which cultural traits were shared, and that this had the effect of 'masking differences and [...] lumping together phenomena which would be discrete under another taxonomic method' (Binford 1965: 205). As Shennan has pointed out, the fact that culture was defined as an entity which could be equated with past ethnic groups served

> 'to remove the untidiness in the cross-cutting distributions, rather than taking the more radical step of recognizing that this untidiness is, in fact, the essence of the situation, arising from the fact that there are no such entities as 'cultures', simply the contingent interrelations of different distributions produced by different factors' (Shennan 1989a: 13).

This understanding of archaeological distributions represents a significant shift in archaeological classification, one which undermines the univariate idea of 'culture'.

6.4.3 Ethnicity and South Levantine Iron Age Archaeology

The recent shifts in the understanding of the relationship between people and material culture have serious repercussions for archaeology. So where does that leave the understanding of ethnicity predominant in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology?

Firstly, the idea that ethnic groups existed and were maintained for centuries in the past as bounded, fixed entities (e.g. Judaeans, Edomites, Israelites, Moabites etc.) that can be observed and analysed in the present is highly questionable. To hypothesise the existence of such entities is to neglect the dynamics and variability of ethnic identities amongst individuals across time and space. As Jones has emphasised:

> 'ethnic identity is based on shifting, situational, subjective identifications of self and others, which are rooted in ongoing daily practice and historical experience, but also subject to transformation and discontinuity' (Jones 1997a: 13-14).

Secondly, the idea that 'culture' groups can be defined has to be questioned. South Levantine Iron Age archaeologists have to recognise the complexities of Iron Age material culture since reanalysis of the late Iron Age material evidence in Chapter 8 of this thesis points to immense local variation within a region formerly perceived as a monolithic, homogenous culture area. Thus far, 'untidiness' has been removed by the creation of a number of 'diagnostic' types which uphold the ideal of the univariate cultural block of culture-historical archaeology.

Finally, the idea that material culture can be directly linked with ethnic identities must be questioned. As the discussions above make clear, ethnic identity may be negotiated through many different means, not necessarily materially and not necessarily in a way that we would recognise in the archaeological record. Moreover, even if certain pottery forms, for example, were associated with identity, to understand them solely in terms of ethnicity is to ignore the fact that material culture may have many different meanings and may be related to a variety of identities, all of which are context dependent.

Although the conclusions above are important for re-assessing south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, the ethnic identities used to describe people living in this area and time period are not totally arbitrary. In the case of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, these ethnic names originate in a number of historical sources. These sources have been discussed in detail in Chapter 4. The perception of ethnicity in those sources requires further discussion however.

6.4.4 Ethnicity and Historical Sources

Historical sources often appear to describe ethnic groups as distinct, homogenous groups of people. Indeed, historical sources probably influenced the similar archaeological approaches to ethnicity, further illustrating the close relationship between history and archaeology in the study of this period (see also for example recent studies of 'Celtic' identities [e.g. James 1998; 1999]). Furthermore, our modern preoccupation with notions of ethnicity and nationalism based on nineteenth century western views has led us to take historical sources at face value. Direct readings of historical sources appear to describe ethnic identities as highly homogenous groups of people that remain constant, even in times of change. Therefore, ethnicity has been studied as something that is clear-cut and real; something that is 'out there' to be discovered through objective analysis.

Indeed, as the main historical source for the Iron Age southern Levant, the Old Testament has been subjected to a number of approaches that have all produced models for the emergence of 'ethnic Israel'. These include the 'German school' in the tradition of Alt (Alt 1968), the 'American school' in the tradition of Albright (Albright 1968), and the 'Sociological' or 'Peasant revolt school' associated with Mendenhall and Gottwald (Mendenhall 1962; 1973; Gottwald 1979). For the German school, the popular 'amphictyony hypothesis' suggested a united Israel that stood out against the surrounding peoples. In the case of the American school, the Israelites represented the conquering outsider who, upon entrance into Palestine, met a foreign culture that could be viewed as ethnically distinct from Israel. For Mendenhall and Gottwald, a peasant revolt pitted villagers against residents of the Palestinian city-states, thus creating ethnic opposition. Literary studies of the Old Testament and archaeological work have raised considerable problems for all of these paradigms over the last few decades. With respect to the amphictyonic context, a number of scholars have shown that there is no convincing evidence for an early united Israel (Fohrer 1966; de Geus 1976). Concerning the conquest model, archaeological excavations have shown that there is no evidence for a unified conquest of Palestine that could be connected with the Israelites (Miller 1985). The peasant revolt hypothesis has also been heavily criticised, not only for its simplistic use of biblical and archaeological data, but also for the fact that there is in fact very little correspondence between the peasant revolt model and the biblical text (Halpern 1983; Finkelstein 1988).

Although these three schools of thought have provided the ground from which Israelite distinctiveness supposedly emerged, the demise of these historical theories is only now beginning to affect biblical studies' view of Israelite identity. For the most part, biblical scholarship has continued to assume the essentially ethnic nature of ancient Israel, primarily because what is perceived as the fundamental statement of Israelite ethnic identity, the patriarchal narratives, is thought to reflect very ancient circumstances (Sparks 1998: 11). Because of the close links between biblical and archaeological scholarship in south Levantine Iron Age scholarship, the continued acceptance by biblical studies of ancient Israel as a bounded, monolithic entity has resulted in the continued archaeological search for its reflection in the material culture of the region.

This is clearly demonstrated in a recent article by a leading biblical scholar, in which she states that

> 'A study of the ethnicity of premonarchic Israel needs to be based on specific texts that indicate the geographical location and boundaries of such a unit' (Edelman 1996: 38).

And that:

> 'Even though ethnicity will be expressed in different ways by different groups [...], it is possible to draw up a list of ways in which it typically is manifested in some form or another. [...] Typical forms of ethnic expression can include [...]: ceramic repertoire, style, and forms of decoration, architecture, diet, religious beliefs and practices, burial customs, language, music, dance, clothing, hairstyles, lifestyles, customs, art, kinship reckoning, phenotypes, modes of production, and social structure' (Edelman 1996: 39-40).

The combination of these two views results in the conception of Israel as a clearly defined, homogenous ethnic entity that is intrinsically linked to the material culture it used and produced:

> 'Without the ability to locate premonarchic Israel and know something of its shifting boundaries over time, all attempts to use elements of the material culture remains of Cisjordan in the Late Bronze and Iron I periods to define distinguishing characteristics of this group are also doomed to failure' (Edelman 1996: 55).

The assumption that the pentateuchal sources (the first five books of the Bible) are very early has however been strongly challenged, beginning with the works of Thompson (1974), Van Seters (1975), and Schmid (1976) in the mid-seventies. Since then, the pentateuchal sources have been increasingly regarded as a literary product of the late monarchy, the exile, or even the Persian and Hellenistic periods (Sparks 1998: 12). It is therefore not possible to determine with certainty which of the traditions found in the biblical books accurately reflects life, events, and attitudes in the ancient southern Levant, because whatever was written would almost certainly have reflected the world view of the authors who lived in later periods than those they describe (Edelman 1996: 39). Indeed, the composition of many of the biblical narratives is removed from the events they describe by hundreds of years (ibid.: 27-28). Since ethnic groups are self-defining systems, the unquestioned acceptance of a much later and 'outside' description of the ethnic identity supposedly held by particular groups of people is theoretically untenable.

Furthermore, the picture is clouded by the fact that despite an overarching concern with identity in the Old Testament, the sentiments that are expressed are not uniform in character. Indeed, as Sparks points out

> 'While certain sources are preoccupied with the Patriarch Abraham, Jacob dominates the discussion in early prophetic literature. In the case of Israel's twelve-tribe ancestry, the biblical picture is clouded by the fact that tribal combinations vary in both name and number in the materials. And why do some texts urge foreigners into Israel's religious fold and others exclude them from the community? How do we explain Abraham's relationship with Hagar when we juxtapose it with Ezra's rejection of foreign women? (Sparks 1998: 11).

In other words, rather than assuming the existence of a single, homogenous 'Israel', it is important to recognise the many and varied expressions of identity present in the Old Testament, including not only ethnic identity, but political, religious, and socio-cultural identity (ibid.: 16). In this respect, Skjeggestad has emphasised that the term 'Israelite' may not actually refer to an ethnic identity, and that instead it may be a political, ideological or territorial designation (Skjeggestad 1992: 168). At the same time, it must also be emphasised that the Old Testament narratives were written and/or edited from a particular viewpoint, so although different views are present, they are cast within an overall perspective which may reflect only one of several communities or parties within the ancient southern Levant (ibid.; Edelman 1996: 55).

Indeed, it must be born in mind that historical sources were written for specific reasons, by specific people, and were situated in a particular socio-economic, political and religious context. In this respect, the Old Testament represents a clear example of a religious and political document. The biblical narratives thus serve a very specific purpose, created by and for a particular group of people. A consideration of authorship is thus imperative as it emphasises the political, religious and socio-economic nature of ethnic identities (see Chapter 4). It is clear that some authors may have used ethnic identities as a tool in the writing of dynastic propaganda for their political masters, for example, by emphasising a king's family lineage or the unity of their kingdom and subjects. Other authors may have been writing specifically from their religious standpoint. Their mentalities and perceptions of ethnicity were likely to have been heavily influenced by these perspectives.

This is not to say however that these identities were simply the literary creation of those authors. These authors, as individuals aware of their own socio-historical context, must have been describing, to some extent, identities with wider importance that *some* people held to be a reality. The identities may also have been well established in oral traditions and might have been reinforced (in literate circles at least) by having been written down. However, in stating that historically attested identities were not simply fictitious, it must also be asked; who were they a reality for and in what context? It is important to consider what the identities were that were expressed and/or felt by the rest - the majority - of the population in the Iron Age southern Levant. There is no evidence (though a general assumption) that the entire population of this region and period felt part of any larger grouping, since many of the groups outside the court and/or literate circles probably do not feature in the pages of narrative history. We must therefore ask at which level group affiliations and ethnic identities mentioned in historical sources were really felt. With these points in mind Amory has written that;

> 'In the obscure rural world of the majority of the population, allegiances and groupings must often have attached to names and localities that have completely escaped the net of aristocratic evidence' (Amory 1994: 4).

There is thus the potential for some Iron Age group identities to have been quite localised. Even though it is not possible to identify local groups with any degree of certainty or theoretical validity, the possibility that such groupings did exist must again lead us to question the simplistic application of broad, all-pervasive identities such as 'Judahite', 'Israelite', 'Edomite' or 'Moabite' to people living in the Iron Age southern Levant. In addition, the possibility that much broader identities were also maintained in certain situations by people in the Iron Age who were potentially maintaining local identities as well, cannot be ruled out. Yet to date, such complexity with regard to ethnicity has not been considered.

It is clear therefore, that biblical scholars and archaeologists cannot simply take descriptions of ethnic groups in historical sources at face value since these will often have been produced from an 'outside' perspective, by an author (or authors) in a particular temporal, geographical, political, and religious context. Not only do historical sources therefore represent a biased depiction of ethnic groups, they may also have excluded any number of contemporary groups. Ethnic designations in historical sources cannot therefore be regarded as straightforward and unproblematic. Archaeologists cannot therefore simply rely on direct readings of historical sources, which appear to describe ethnic identities as highly homogenous groups of people that remain constant, as proof of the existence of clear-cut and real ethnic groups that are 'out there' to be discovered through objective analysis. A more critical approach to the analysis of representations of ethnic identities in the literary sources is necessary.

6.4.5 Conclusion

There are a number of conclusions that can be drawn from the ideas presented above which contradict the core assumptions of the majority of south Levantine Iron Age studies. To begin with, it has been shown that normative approaches to ethnicity are theoretically questionable. Archaeologists should not expect to find objective proof of large-scale, clearly defined ethnic groups in the Iron Age southern Levant because ethnic identity does not exist in such a way. Furthermore, historical sources cannot be taken as support for the idea of ethnic homogeneity, since a consideration of authorship in context reveals that reading texts at face value ignores the complexities of ethnicity.

Secondly, it has been shown that material culture, and especially archaeological cultures, cannot be directly equated to ethnic groups. Indeed, the usage and distribution of artefacts and practices may be as variable across time and space as ethnicity itself.

Lastly, it must be emphasised that ethnic identity is 'of the mind'. As Halsall has pointed out:

> 'Ethnicity, as an identity, is a state of mind. Material culture may very well be used actively to create such categories, to underline these identities, but if there *is* a link between artefacts and ethnicity it is with *this* mental state of affairs, and *not* with the birthplace of one's ancestors' (Halsall 1999: 141).

Archaeological discussion of ethnicity can therefore only ever be hypothetical, since it is impossible to get inside the minds of past individuals. Indeed, defining ethnic identities is a complex process even for contemporary observers, never mind for archaeologists.

As Lucy has pointed out, given the problems inherent in understanding ethnicity in the past, it is perhaps best if archaeologists look primarily at the local contextual usage of material culture and the local means of creating and maintaining gender or age identities (which have some degree of physicality that may be recovered), rather than *starting* with broad ethnic groupings in mind (Lucy 1999: 34-50).

These conclusions clearly have important implications for the present study. As was noted above, particular views of ethnicity and the relationship between ethnicity and material culture have been - and still are - important for the understanding of the Iron Age southern Levant. If these ideas can be questioned, it follows that it may be necessary to seek alternative means of understanding material culture distributions. Such possible alternatives will be presented below.

6.5 Reassessments

An alternative understanding of the relationship between people and material culture which avoids the assumptions and generalisations critiqued above is based on the Theory of Structuration developed by Anthony Giddens in *The Constitution of Society* (1984). In recent years, structuration theory has become influential in archaeology and has been employed in a range of studies (e.g. Barrett 1987; 1988a; 1988b; 1994; Graves 1989; 2000; Lucy 1998; Mizoguchi 1993; Revell 1999; Dobres 1995; 1999a; 1999b; 2000; Dobres and Robb 2000). Using an approach devised by John Barrett (1988a) for the application of structuration to the study of archaeological remains, the aim of

this section is to present an alternative understanding of archaeological material and people, based on social practice.

6.5.1 Theories of Practice and Structuration

Proponents of the new archaeology reacted against traditional culture-history and the idea that material culture merely reflected social norms. In doing so they imposed a functionalist conceptualisation of culture, including material culture, as an epiphenomenal adaptive mechanism (Hodder 1982b: 4-5; Shanks and Tilley 1987: 94). Functionalist approaches failed to take into account however, the way in which cultural schemes structure social reality. Law-like models based on abstract notions of efficiency and adaptation could not account for the cultural diversity so clearly manifested in the varied responses of particular societies to similar environmental and social conditions (Jones 1997a: 117). As in functionalist approaches, where human agency was often subordinated to environmental determinism, the role of human agency was also curtailed in structuralist approaches, where it was determined by abstract structures that lay outside the domain of individual and group history (Bourdieu 1977: 72; Hodder 1982b: 8-9). Both normative and structuralist approaches therefore failed to provide an adequate account of the generation of social structure in the course of social action, and as a result people were represented as culturally determined dupes mechanistically obeying normative rules or structures (Jones 1997a: 117). Moreover, as normative and structuralist approaches tended to disregard adaptive processes, and failed to develop an account of the generation of norms or social structures with relation to human agency, they did not provide an adequate framework for the analysis of processes of social change (Hodder 1982b: 8).

In the early 1980s, scholars began to address these issues. Marxist scholars began to investigate the relationship between institutional structures (economic and ideological, especially), sociopolitical movements, conflicts among individuals and groups, and large-scale transformations (e.g. Leone 1986; Miller and Tilley 1984; Spriggs 1984; Tilley 1982). Other researchers meanwhile turned their attention to structures and symbols 'in action' (e.g. Hodder 1982a; 1982b). There was generally a move towards agency-oriented questions. The main tenet of this move was the idea that historical contexts of social and material interaction, along with non-discursive perceptions of the world, served as the proximate boundary conditions within which ancient people negotiated their world, while simultaneously creating and being constrained by it (Dobres 2000: 7). These ideas stemmed from Garfinkel's work in the 1960s (1984), and more recently from the writings of Giddens (1979; 1984) and Bourdieu (1977). The work of these scholars was subsequently taken in many different

directions, but in archaeology it has been the work of Giddens and Bourdieu that has had the most impact.

All these theorists view social agents not as omniscient, practical, and free-willed economisers - as in previous approaches - but rather as socially embedded, imperfect, and often impractical people (Dobres 2000: 4). They also see a much more interactive relationship between the structures in which agents exist and, paradoxically, which they create (ibid.). These ideas can be traced back to Marx, who wrote that:

> 'people [sic] make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please, they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past' (Marx 1983: 12 [orig. 1869]; c.f. Graves 2000: 13).

Marx's focus was on *praxis*, which was fundamentally a theory of knowledge concerning people's practical engagement with the world (Dobres 2000: 5). In addition, his emphasis on production linked material and experiential activity to society, thought, and beliefs (Dobres and Robb 2000; Tilley 1982).

6.5.2 Anthony Giddens: Theory of Structuration

It was Anthony Giddens who reconstituted these ideas in the late 1970s and early 1980s (1979; 1984). In *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (1984) he argued that society is not a reified entity, with a life of its own; rather, it is created and maintained through the actions of knowledgeable human agents, whose actions are in turn constrained by patterns of behaviour learnt and deemed appropriate within that society. Giddens' 'duality of structure' thus emphasises that we are studying *people*, knowledgeable agents with the capacity to understand their own actions at the moment of performance, instead of inanimate puppets with strings pulled by external forces (Revell 1999: 52). The actions of people must then be seen as meaningful within that given context. As Giddens writes:

> 'What agents know about what they do, and why they do it - their knowledgeability *as* agents - is largely carried in practical consciousness. Practical consciousness consists of all the things which actors know tacitly about how to 'go on' in the contexts of social life without being able to give them direct discursive expression' (Giddens 1984: xxiii).

For Giddens it is important to recognise that the practical knowledge of 'how to go on' is rediscovered and reproduced through action. Social structures, as sets of rules and resources, do therefore not exist as an abstract set of rules independent of human action. Instead, structuration is the way in which the structuring principles of social institutions are both medium and outcome of

their reproduction through human action (Graves 1989: 298). Furthermore, human action takes place within a temporal and spatial context. Since for Giddens social practices are those structured human actions which, routinely performed, reproduce the institutions which characterise society, and those actions are situated within time and space, social practices are thus the means by which societies are reproduced through time (ibid.).

In addition to human action being situated in time and space, the knowledge of 'how to go on' is constructed with reference to, and is dependent on the conditions of a material world, perceived and exploited as a cultural resource, through social practice (ibid.; Revell 1999: 53). The term *locales* is used by Giddens to refer to the spatial location of such practices. A clear understanding of the importance of the material situations occupied by social practices is however not developed by Giddens (Barrett 1988a: 9). He has not elaborated how the material world of his locales exists as a structured medium by which the social world is encountered, created and reproduced in the same way as structured knowledge, and subject to the same process of structuration (Graves 1989: 299). It is to the work of Pierre Bourdieu that some archaeologists have turned in order to address this problem (e.g. Barrett 1988a; 1994; Graves 1989).

6.5.3 Pierre Bourdieu: The Concept of Habitus

Like Giddens, Bourdieu proposed a 'theory of practice' in his *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Bourdieu 1977). However, Bourdieu emphasised that an individual's awareness of their own social context and how to go on is both socially and *materially* learned and constituted. Bourdieu argued that

> 'inhabited space - and above all the house - is the principle locus for the objectification of the generative schemes; and through the intermediary of the divisions and hierarchies it sets up between things, persons, and practices, this tangible classifying system continuously inculcates and reinforces the taxonomic principles underlying all the arbitrary provisions of [...] culture' (Bourdieu 1977: 89).

For Bourdieu, the home is thus the place where knowledge and understanding are generated - a concept he calls *habitus*, the 'strategy-generating principle enabling agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations' (Bourdieu 1977: 72). Barrett has described how the construction of the individual's habitus - his or her own biography and current sense of social awareness and competency - is dependent on the senses of sight, sound, touch and smell as much as on memories and awareness of social interaction. As such, the physicality of the human body and the world in general is a primary reference point for any individual's understanding of social context (Barrett 1994: 13-14). Likewise, Graves has noted that;

> 'spatial divisions, ease or constraint of access, the temporal location and frequency of practice, and any material objects used, all become imbued with cultural meaning through that practice, forming media through which people recognize their own status relative to others. Thus the individual becomes socialized within the culture of the group, whilst at the same time the group and its cultural values are reproduced' (Graves 1989: 299).

The material world thus contains acculturated structures drawn upon and invested with meaning by human action (Barrett 1988a: 9). Material culture thus has no single, objective meaning. Instead, the material world can be imbued with many meanings, dependent on the many (intersecting) discourses into which it is drawn, since meaning only exists in the practical moment of human agency (Graves 1989: 299). With those institutions or individuals who manage to continually promote a particular authoritative meaning or knowledge against the intrusion of others, lies power. Material resources thus play an important role within these discourses, and it is in this context that material culture can be used as a means of 'presencing' in authoritative discourse (ibid.: 299-300).

6.5.4 John Barrett: The Field of Discourse

In archaeology, Barrett was one of the first to connect agency and material culture via the theoretical bridge of Giddens' structuration theory and the writings of Bourdieu. He devised the concept of the *Field of Discourse* (1988a) as an analytical tool with which to study the process of structuration when looking at archaeological remains. Rather than regarding archaeological evidence as a static outcome of past dynamics (a record), Barrett argues that material remains are the residue of material conditions which structured, and were organised by, past social practice. In other words,

> 'social practices are the object of our study: archaeology is the empirical examination of material evidence to discover how such practices were maintained within particular material conditions' (Barrett 1988a: 9).

The 'field' of discourse is the extent to which both time and space are occupied and influenced by the performance of practices within a discourse; it contains the material conditions within which the dynamic interplay of human relations occur (Graves 2000: 13). Many such fields will thus exist in parallel. The analytical components of the field, as outlined by Barrett, include the temporal - these may for example correspond to cultural appropriations of natural, seasonal rhythms such as agricultural cycles and faunal migration - and the spatial or geographical. In addition, there are the cultural resources which are used to shape and carry out the demands of particular authorities through discourse (Barrett 1988a: 11). Further to this there are the transformations which occur

> 'in the available cultural resources as the field is reproduced. These transformations themselves reproduce authority and domination in discourse whilst transforming the material conditions of future discourse (the latter may be seen as an unintended consequence of action)' (ibid.: 12).

6.5.5 An Archaeology of Practice

These ideas have important implications for archaeology. Firstly, this understanding of human social life means that to adopt generalised, aggregate approaches to material culture interpretation - for example through 'cultures' - is too simplistic, since it fails to recognise the importance of subjective, knowledgeable agency. Such assumptions suggest that all those who made, used or saw objects (or buildings and places) understood them in the same way. Is it, for example, possible to assume that everyone who saw 'Edomite' pottery in the southern Levant understood it in the same way? Did everyone understand where it came from and what it was, or did it have different meanings for different people? Furthermore, an individual's perception of an object's meaning may also change depending on time and place. Archaeological remains, therefore, can never simply tell us about people's views of them in the past; we can never enter into a dialogue with the past (Barrett 1987: 472).

Secondly, Barrett has described how direct, generalised interpretations of material culture treat archaeological remains as a static record of the past. Hence,

> '[i]nferences about the past are drawn from the various procedures which 'read', 'translate' or otherwise give meaning to this record' (Barrett 1988a: 5).

He describes how this treatment of archaeological evidence has taken two forms. Material culture has been seen as either an objective, fossilised record of mechanical relationships between people (as with culture-historical and processual approaches), or as a record of ideas and meanings ascribed to artefacts by past individuals (as with structural/symbolic approaches to material culture) (Barrett 1987: 470; 1988a: 5-7).

Barrett questions the validity of these ideas in two ways. First, he doubts our ability to 'get inside the heads' of people in the past and to deduce their thought processes (Barrett 1988a: 8). Second, he argues that the relationship between people, material culture and social structures (such as status or ethnic groups) was not - and is not - static. 'Meaning' cannot, therefore, simply be 'read off' from material culture by archaeologists (Barrett 1988a: 6). Hence, the relationship between people and material culture cannot be easily or simply deduced.

It therefore follows that approaches that aim to generate generalised meanings, realities or facts concerning the past and material culture are flawed. A single historical reality cannot be determined because 'it' never existed (Barrett 1994: 169, 171). Instead, it must be accepted that in any particular situation, material culture will be subject to a huge range of dynamic 'interpretative strategies' as individuals use and encounter objects, buildings or places (ibid.). Material culture may in turn create, maintain, challenge or subvert practices, identities, and institutions. Nevertheless, it is still possible for a dominant or authoritative discourse to emerge, which may be reflected in regularities in material culture usage. How that discourse came about and was maintained through time must be investigated in each case (Barrett 1988a: 9).

The challenge for archaeologists, therefore, is to attempt to understand

> 'how, in any particular period, the lives of people were created by their engagement upon those material conditions which the archaeologist is also able to investigate. It is the creation of people as subjects, and not simply the creation of material things, which will be the object of our archaeological enquiry [...] In other words, we move away from asking 'what kinds of people made these material conditions?' to an understanding of what the possibilities were of being human within those material and historical conditions' (Barrett 1994: 4-5).

Through this approach to archaeological interpretation, the context in which material culture is found (or where sites are situated in the landscape) becomes important. This is because material culture only becomes meaningful in the context of social practice, when acting as a prop for the strategies of social life (ibid: 168-9). Meaning is not fixed and may change according to the specific time-space context of social practice in which it is being used; what Barrett calls the 'field of discourse' (Barrett 1987; 1991: 3). Therefore, when archaeologists discuss the variety of ways in which a particular object or place may have become meaningful at certain times, this must take account of the specific context in which those material realities were found (with due consideration for taphonomy and disturbance). It is not possible to discuss 'meaning' outside this context, because that meaning was not, and is not, static. Archaeologists, therefore, cannot create any past they wish, the possibilities of interpretation are not infinite (c.f. Barrett 1994: 170), because the archaeological data - the material conditions of past lives - must be central to any interpretation proposed. Any charges of relativism are thus successfully challenged by this approach.

This approach therefore leads to a practice of archaeology that requires an extremely close engagement with excavated remains; a detailed understanding of objects, places, how they may have been used, and the contexts in which they were deposited or built. This has obvious implications for approaches to fieldwork and recording (see Chapter 5). In doing this, scholars must expect to find complexity, diversity, and variation, not uniformity or conformity with pre-existing

models (Barrett 1995: 9-12). It is uniformity that must be investigated and explained; might objects or practices have maintained a dominant discourse? Furthermore, particular attention must be paid to whether such uniformity is a true reflection of past practices, identities and institutions or whether they actually reflect our methods of analysis and understanding (e.g. Barrett 1997 on approaches to the Roman Empire; Hill 1995 on Iron Age hill forts and society; Lucy 1998; 2000 on 'Anglo-Saxon' cemeteries). Finally, because the meaning ascribed to material culture is subjective - in the past and the present - it must be accepted that all interpretations are 'partial and provisional' (Barrett 1995: 9). We must therefore expect our ideas to change with time. There is thus no *absolute* past or truth. This realisation may lead to a greater appreciation in archaeology of the dynamic relationship between the past and the present, rather than assuming that particular ideas are straightforward facts or realities to be investigated.

It is these ideas that lie at the heart of the theoretical approach to be adopted in the present study. Normative, generalised approaches are rejected, and the aim is instead to attempt to engage with the lives of people in the past. The implications of this approach for archaeological analysis will be discussed in the following chapter, where the methodology used in the present study is presented.

SECTION THREE

Towards Alternative Approaches

CHAPTER SEVEN

Reassessing 'Edomite' Archaeology: Methodology and Background

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters critiques of the various types of archaeological and historical evidence for the late Iron southern Levant and the 'Edomites' have been presented. It has been shown that much of the evidence and many of the theoretical assumptions crucial to the creation and maintenance of the standard construction of this period can be questioned or interpreted in other ways. The aim of the next two chapters is to build on these critiques, using the alternative approaches presented in Chapter 6 to re-examine some of the actual archaeological evidence for the 'Edomites'. The main intention is to demonstrate that the questions asked of the archaeological evidence determine the conclusions drawn from it and that by asking different questions it may be possible to obtain different understandings, provided appropriate data is available. If any new patterns in the data to be analysed in this study emerge, it may be possible to suggest alternative interpretations.

There will be three main sections in the present chapter. Firstly, building on the various critiques already presented, this chapter will outline how the material component of the present study will proceed and why a particular approach has been adopted. Broadly speaking, this will consist of a contextual and comparative study of a number of pottery types. These types will include late Iron Age pottery from southern Israel and those that have been identified as 'Edomite' which have been significant in attempts to establish the cultural background of the sites at which this pottery has been found. The reasons for selecting these pottery types as subjects for the contextual study will therefore also be presented. In addition, the theoretical background to the methodology presented in this chapter will be discussed. These three sections are essential background to the analysis undertaken in this study, the results of which are presented in Chapter 8. To begin with, the theoretical background for the methodology adopted here will be discussed.

7.2. Structuration Theory and Social Practice

In Chapter 6 it was shown that the implications of theories of practice and structuration for the analysis of material culture are the potential for it to be seen as complex, multi-dimensional and dynamic, thus undermining the idea that it directly reflects the identities of people and general

processes, such as ethnic/cultural change (Barrett 1994; Lucy 1999). Indeed, it was argued that objects and places are/were given meaning through being used in social practices which they also help to create and form. Individual social agents conducted those social practices and it therefore follows that their views and understandings of both the material culture and practices are likely to have been diverse. Generalisations about the meaning of archaeological remains will therefore always be far too simplistic. In addition, any meaning ascribed to an object or place by an individual is context specific, hence it may vary over time or space, as well as from person to person. Again, the idea that the same material culture or practices represent *only* common meanings or processes must be questioned (c.f. Barrett 1994: 92). Archaeologists, therefore, should not attempt to produce generalised discussions of what their evidence meant in the past or what process it illustrates. Instead interpretations must highlight how and why places and practices might have been perceived differently by different people; how and why might individuals have lived and acted at certain times and in certain places, within a set of material conditions. Furthermore, if there appears to have been some uniformity in practice, such as the use of a particular type of pottery in southern Jordan and Israel, how did the actions of individual agents create this situation? And finally the critical question, to what extent is apparent homogeneity due to our methods of analysis and interpretation?

Highlighting the role of agency, and seeing the activities of daily life as social practice, has important implications for our understanding of the late Iron Age. In many previous approaches to late Iron Age remains the main concern has been with their ethnic identity, cultural affiliation, and date. However, the activities involving these remains in daily life are particular types of social practice and we must examine the way they were enacted by the people concerned. The practices selected by individuals or groups of people as an appropriate way to carry out activities, will be determined by who those people are, what they are doing and who they are doing it for. The way of 'doing things' deemed appropriate in any given socio-historical context is determined by, and also maintains, those practices and ways of seeing the world (although such practices and rules can always be challenged or subverted).

Given the variety of people who may have been involved in particular activities, it is necessary to think about all the potentially different perspectives of those who may have been involved; or indeed those who may have been excluded. Who carried out the activity, who decided what was being done and for whom? It is also important to consider the temporal and spatial context of such activities. When did they take place? At a particular time of the year, week, or day? And where did they take place? In a particular area of the site, a particular building or area of a building, or perhaps even off-site? Different attitudes to the various tasks of daily life may be expressed in the intra-site

location(s) - or even the geographical or topographical location(s) - selected by a community for a particular activity. For example, attitudes to death might determine the placement of burial grounds, other attitudes determine the location for the disposal of refuse, the preparation of food, and religious activities. Finally therefore, it is important to realise that any higher level entities which did exist would have been the summative product of lots of these local actions.

Although we may only ever hypothesise about some of these aspects, it is important to remember when comparing assemblages that the individual perspectives, as well as the temporal and spatial context concerning those assemblages, may have been completely different from each other. So-called 'Edomite' pottery is for example found with completely different assemblages of material in Israel and in Jordan, and even between individual sites within these areas. Thus, these situations are not just different means of carrying out the same activity, but rather they suggest entirely different practices (see Chapter 8).

It is through asking such questions, that we can begin to contextualise those remains now recovered by archaeologists; remains which, in many previous approaches to archaeological evidence, have been decontextualised objects of enquiry. Given the views outlined above, the huge number of ways in which any activity can be regarded and carried out is emphasised. It is for this reason that we cannot attempt to understand material culture without knowing the context in which it was used, since objects or places only become meaningful through their use in certain contexts and that meaning may change depending on the context. This also means that we cannot use one particular aspect of a community's way of life, funerary archaeology or agricultural practices for example, as a means by which to generalise about the structure or beliefs of a society as a whole (Barrett 1994: 87-8). Of course, these activities are reproduced within the same material and social conditions as everyday life (Barrett 1991: 5); the people involved, the identities they claim, the objects used may be encountered on a day-to-day basis. Yet within the context of funerary rituals, for example, times, places and objects may, depending on who it is, become significant for different reasons. Thus, to map out the 'entire essence' of a society from one social practice is an inherently flawed approach (Barrett 1988b: 31). Indeed, to continue with funerary archaeology as an example, funerary rituals were probably not a daily occurrence; they were a form of social practice that happened at certain times and in certain places. They were a particular 'field of discourse' (Barrett 1987). Given that we cannot attempt to understand material culture without knowing the context in which it was used, then the archaeological remains of funerary rites can only be understood as part of the practices associated with death and burial.

7.2.1 Summary and Discussion

Of course, archaeologists cannot actually answer many of the questions posed above. Nevertheless, merely raising these questions and thinking about past activities in this way is important because it emphasises just how diverse and complex these practices, and perceptions of them, are likely to have been. This approach stands in complete contrast to that employed by many south Levantine Iron Age scholars in the last 100 years. Archaeologists have often seen no problem with generalising about the late Iron Age using fragmentary excavated remains. They have seen these remains as reflecting 'Edomite' (or Judaean, Moabite, Israelite etc.) activities conducted by 'Edomite' people who were part of an 'Edomite society'. Such generalising tendencies remain standard practice, with authors still referring to 'Edomite' material culture and practices and 'the meaning' (singular) of pottery or figurines.

Undoubtedly, certain features of archaeological evidence do appear to have regularity over time and space, for example the use of 'Edomite' pottery over a particular time-span in both Jordan and Israel. These practices may also have maintained a dominant discourse or body of symbolism. Yet such symbolism 'whilst being widely recognised, was none the less deployed to carry forward many possible traditions of knowledge' (Barrett 1994: 50). Hence, coherency of archaeological remains does not imply they created and maintained entirely uniform meanings and practices for people living in the past (ibid: 92).

These conclusions also have important implications for understandings of change in late Iron Age Israel. If it is not possible to generalise about meanings and practices, then we also cannot generalise about how such things changed. If it is too simplistic to define material culture as 'Edomite' then it is also too simplistic to discuss where it 'came from' and thus discuss its origins only in terms of migration, invasion, or diffusion. These issues will be discussed further in Chapter 9, where alternative understandings of material culture change will be presented.

Given these conclusions, archaeologists should seek to understand late Iron Age material culture assemblages by developing a detailed understanding of developments in local areas rather than relying on generalised assumptions. In other words, a bottom-up approach instead of top-down. Indeed;

> 'In order to be able to interpret archaeological evidence, a detailed understanding of developments in local areas must first be developed, before trying to explain changes over wider areas. If large-scale patterns can be seen (such as the distribution of a particular brooch type across Eastern England), they must be recognized as being the product of many more complex patterns and practices, which seem simple when viewed from a great enough distance' (Lucy 1999: 38).

The analysis of certain pottery types to be presented in this and the following chapter, will investigate material culture that has usually been interpreted with reference to a generalised assumption, namely 'Edomite' ethnicity and the movement of people from southern Jordan to southern Israel in the late Iron Age. The aim of this and the next chapter will be to highlight the complexities of the practices that employed those pottery types; complexities which have hitherto been overlooked.

7.3 Data Analysis: Description and Methodology

The aim of this section is to demonstrate why a certain body of archaeological evidence was chosen to investigate and reassess 'Edomite' archaeology as well as why it was analysed in a particular way. Two factors determined the form of the archaeological analysis adopted in this study. The first was the need to address the normative model for material culture patterning in late Iron Age Israel and Jordan; that is to say movement of people from southern Jordan (i.e. the 'Edomite homeland') to southern Israel and the presence of 'Edomites' in Jordan. It was therefore necessary to compare the late Iron Age archaeology in southern Jordan with that found in southern Israel. Second, the analysis also had to take into account the theoretical approaches to archaeological interpretation described above and in Chapter 6.

7.3.1 Possible Methodologies and the Limitations of the Data Set

A majority of the archaeological evidence for the late Iron Age (from both Israel and Jordan), especially that which has been implicated in 'Edomite' archaeology, comes from settlement sites. In order to compare evidence from southern Israel and Jordan - and thus examine in detail the material often used to support the idea of ethnic groups and their movements - the original aim was to evaluate settlement assemblages from both regions that are now dated to the late Iron Age. In order to avoid generalised assumptions and in order to investigate local practices and material culture usage, a contextual analysis of these sites was to be undertaken. The intention was to examine each context with 'Edomite' pottery in detail. What it contained, where it was located within the site, and how it related to other material evidence on site. In this way, it was intended that a detailed picture of local practices could be determined. Individual sites would then be compared, noting any similarities or differences between sites in southern Jordan and Israel, and sites with 'Edomite' pottery and sites without 'Edomite' pottery in Israel. The intention was to provide some indication as to the similarity (or otherwise) of the 'Edomite' sites in southern Israel and Jordan. Approaching the material culture at these sites in this way would mean that a consideration of practice and

material culture usage was included, thus avoiding the simple artefactual parallels that have been central to many previous studies. This methodology was, however, abandoned for a number of practical and theoretical reasons.

To begin with, the above approach requires sites to have been both excavated and published to a very high standard in order to be useful. However, during the last 100 years or so, sites now considered to have been occupied in the late Iron Age have been subject to archaeological methods of highly variable quality. A few - mostly relatively recent excavations/publications - provide some useful data, including some contextual information and scientific analyses, for example Horvat Qitmit (Beit-Arieh 1995a) and Tel 'Ira (Beit-Arieh 1999). However, even these reports do not provide full publication of all contexts or quantified analysis. Other reports list only the most obvious or 'significant' artefacts found at a particular site (e.g. Ramat Rahel, Beersheba, Tell Goren), such as a selection of pottery types and unusual small finds.

Added to these problems is the standard method of excavation in the southern Levant. As was shown in Chapter 5, material culture excavated by this method is not related to meaningful deposits. It is recorded within *a priori* units, which means that the way in which it is recorded and presented in publications is not the way in which it was originally deposited. Contextual analysis is therefore rendered impossible, since material is potentially being grouped artificially according to an archaeological construct, rather than according to depositional criteria. It is impossible to work back to stratigraphic units once the excavated material has been recorded and published in the 'locus to stratum method'. However, as was also shown in Chapter 5, some excavations do seem to define loci stratigraphically rather than typologically. It might therefore seem reasonable to include in the analysis only those sites with high quality modern reports and stratigraphy-led excavation methods. As was shown in Chapter 5 however, this is not possible since the vast majority of sites have simply not been published fully, if at all. 'Edomite' and late Iron Age material evidence is thus highly variable, and the idea of examining whole site assemblages is not sufficiently flexible to deal with this variability. In other words, the data available for analysis would not be comparable at a number of levels and would therefore not allow for meaningful comparison between sites. In addition, to concentrate solely on well-excavated and published sites eliminates from the analysis many sites that have been key to debates about the archaeology of the 'Edomites' such as Aroer, Arad, Haseva, Masos, Malhata, 'Uza, Sera', and Haror. Given these practical and theoretical problems, it was necessary to abandon attempts to compare whole sites. Chapter 8, therefore, contains the results of analysis based on a different body of data and using a different methodology.

To avoid some of these problems, it was decided instead to focus on pottery assemblages and (where possible) their contexts and comparability with each other. Pottery was selected as the main focal point of this study since this is often the only element of Iron Age excavations undertaken in the southern Levant that is published (if publication was undertaken at all). In addition, the analysis of pottery assemblages ensured, to as close a degree as possible, that comparable archaeological remains from southern Israel and Jordan were being examined. Finally, and most importantly, pottery was selected since so-called 'Edomite' pottery has formed the main source of material evidence for the 'Edomites' in the southern Levant.

7.3.2 Data Description

The ceramic assemblages chosen for this study include first of all those from all the late Iron Age sites excavated and published (in some form) in southern Jordan: Buseirah, Tawilan, Umm el-Biyara, Tell el-Kheleifeh, Ghrareh, Khirbet Ishra, and Khirbet el-Megheitah. For the sites that were not fully published, but where the excavated material was kept in storage (Buseirah, Umm el-Biyara, Ishra, Megheitah, and Ghrareh), the stored collections were analysed. Sites such as Tawilan and Tell el-Kheleifeh which have appeared in final publication form, but where the reports for a variety of reasons do not provide adequate information, were used in analyses where possible, but left out of others (see Appendix 1).

Assemblages from southern Israel include all those from the late Iron Age sites at which so-called 'Edomite' material was excavated: Horvat Qitmit, Tel 'Ira, En Haseva, Tel Masos, Aroer, Tel Malhata, Tel Haror, Tel Sera', Tel Arad, Tel Beersheba, and Horvat 'Uza. From these 11 sites, only Qitmit, 'Ira, and Masos have been fully published. However, these reports were variable in the information they provided (see Appendix 1). The material from the remainder of sites was analysed if it was accessible in storage (see Appendix 1). The site of Kadesh Barnea also produced large quantities of 'Edomite' pottery, but since this assemblage has not been published and was not accessible for analysis, it had to be left out of the present study.

For comparison, all published assemblages from late Iron Age sites in southern Israel were included: Tel el-Ful III, Lachish II-III, Jerusalem (the Ophel), Tell Beit Mirsim A, Beth Zur III, Tel Goren, Ramat Rahel, Tel Abu Tuwein, Gezer V, and Hurvat Shilhah. Assemblages from sites with unusable stratigraphy and/or publications were eliminated from this study, including those from Beth Shemesh, Gibeon, Nasbeh 3-2, Batash II, and Rabud B1 for example. Given the time restraints of the present study, no attempt was made to analyse the many unpublished late Iron Age

assemblages from southern Israel such as those from Azekah, Bethel, Buqei'a, 'Erani, Halif, Hashavyahu, Hebron, Hesi, Judeideh, Mareshah, Nagila, Qumran, and Zafit.

As was explained above, the publication and/or excavation methods of the sites listed in this section vary immensely. To provide a detailed overview of these methods, Appendix 1 lists all the relevant details concerning recording methods, what was published, whether contextual information was available, whether the collection can be regarded as representative or not, the excavation methods used, and whether the collection was accessible in storage or not. Appendix 1 also lists the relevant publications for each site, with the full reference given in the bibliography. In the following section references will therefore not be given every time a particular site or assemblage is referred to. This overview is essential to the analysis of the pottery, the results of which are presented in Chapter 8.

7.3.3 Methodology: Contextual Analysis

Given that the aim of this study was to examine how material culture was used as part of the practices of daily life it was necessary to analyse, in as much detail as possible, the contexts in which the pottery in question was found. Despite the problems that variable excavation methods pose for such an analysis, it was decided that as long as these limitations were born in mind, it would still be a valuable exercise to try and analyse material culture according to where it was found and what it was associated with. The main reason for this was that this form of analysis has not been attempted before for late Iron Age pottery from the southern Levant.

Hence, for each context with 'Edomite' sherds or vessels, information was gathered from excavation reports or site records concerning its make-up. The location of the context, what the context represented (a pit, a building etc), its associated small finds (small finds, organic material etc), and the numbers of 'non-Edomite' and 'Edomite' pot forms associated (bowls, jars, jugs, kraters, cooking pots) were of particular interest. Contexts at the sites where 'Edomite' pottery was found that did not actually contain any 'Edomite' pottery were also recorded in this way for comparison. All this information, along with the name of the site at which the sherd was found and the date and code of its context was recorded in a Microsoft Access database. An example of the data form used to input the information (there being one form for each relevant context) can be seen in Figure 41.

When sufficient information had been recorded for each context (with '-' indicating where information was unknown/unavailable) the data was analysed (the complete database can be found in Appendix 2). This was done firstly by comparing the contexts with 'Edomite' pottery to those

without from individual sites in southern Israel; secondly by comparing the contexts with 'Edomite' pottery from the sites in southern Israel to each other; thirdly by comparing Jordanian contexts to each other; and lastly by comparing contexts from the Jordanian sites with those with 'Edomite' material from southern Israel. The focus was on examining the variables described above individually and attempting to identify patterns in the data using the two-sample T-test in SPSS and graphs produced in Microsoft Excel. This analysis was not done for the data set as a whole, since the detailed information required for such an undertaking simply was not available for most sites. Therefore, data from only six sites, Buseirah, Umm el-Biyara, Malhata, 'Uza, 'Ira, and Qitmit, were included in this analysis. It must be emphasised however, that even from these sites the information was not complete and since no information was available concerning the complete numbers of pottery, small finds, contexts and so forth, it is unclear how representative the analysed contexts and their 'contents' are.

However, the advantage of this analysis is that it deals directly with the objects that are often seen as significant evidence for the 'Edomites' and is flexible enough to accommodate the highly variable evidence for this period. For example, a context for which much information was available will have a very complete data form, with all categories filled in. On the other hand, for some contexts it may only be possible to fill in a few categories. Nonetheless, at least the poorly-excavated/recorded/published contexts are not being excluded entirely from the study; even contexts listed only as containing 'Edomite' pottery have a role in illustrating the relative numbers of individual examples and types from Israel and Jordan. In conclusion therefore, as robust a method as possible has been developed to extract information from data which is often inadequately documented. Without this, the only alternative is to fall back on current practices, which as has been demonstrated, are fraught with problems.

7.3.4 Methodology: Functional Ceramics Analysis

Since detailed contextual analysis was only possible for a small number of sites, other forms of analysis were employed with which to retrieve as much information as possible from the remaining relevant data. Given that the aim was to examine how material culture was used as part of the practices of daily life it was necessary to analyse, in as much detail as possible, how the pottery in question might have been used.

To address this question, it is necessary to consider the main function of pottery, its use for the containment and manipulation of food and drink. Differences in practice relating to these activities

should, in theory, be visible in the different proportions of different pottery forms in an assemblage. A relationship between vessel form and its possible use must therefore be isolated.

To establish vessel use through vessel form, a scheme devised for the functional analysis of ceramics was used (Pope forthcoming). This scheme is based on the premise that a vessel's use determines its form (ibid.: 4; Smith 1985: 254; Sinopoli 1991: 83). Using ethnographic studies, a direct relationship between form and use is claimed, by identifying different forms of vessel based on ease of access through the opening, or a vessel's 'restriction' (Pope forthcoming: 4; Braun 1983). The accessibility of the contents via the vessel opening is only one factor which dictates form, but it is believed to be one of the most important regarding vessel use (Rice 1987: 241). Other factors, such as stability and the ability to conduct heat safely, whilst fundamental regarding use - affect only the base of the vessel and whilst volume may affect form, it says little about vessel function (Pope forthcoming). Access affects not only the opening, but also the rim, shoulder and body of a vessel.

The main problem with the application of this functional scheme is that it divorces functional use from use dictated by non-functional practice. Recent approaches to ceramics stress that vessel use is also determined to a great extent by what constitutes habitus (Cumberpatch 1997). An example of this is drinking wine from a wine-glass in polite company, or perhaps from a mug when with friends. This is a problem which has to be acknowledged. However, since the scheme divides function into four very broad categories (serving, storage, cooking, and processing), the aim is to discover what activities were predominant at particular sites and if this predominance is associated with any other specific material culture patterns (for example patterns in the use of particular vessel types at particular sites and not at others). If this is the case, it might hint at the social practices underlying such activities. In this way, whilst fully acknowledging its limitations, the application of the present scheme remains valid.

Other problems include the fact that no assemblage is truly representative of past human activity. Firstly, change in an assemblage may represent a change in depositional practice and not necessarily change in on-site activity. For example, the problem of non-random deposition, in other words the practice of disposal of a particular vessel form in a particular place, in a particular period, or by certain individuals. Secondly, the existence of variable breakage rates may provide a biased representation of on-site activity. Thirdly, there is no way of accounting for the use of organic vessels such as wood and basket-ware in some activities, or of metal vessels which may have been recycled. There are also problems encountered as part of the excavation process, for example non-total excavation of sites, differential survival or selective retrieval of sherds (Morris 1987; Sharples

1991), and residuality. There are also numerous problems concerning the use of site reports, most importantly (and commonly) the lack of quantification for data that is published. A particular problem regarding Israeli pottery reports is that the publication of whole vessels is favoured over sherds and/or any form of quantification. Excavated pottery assemblages go through painstaking restoration to produce as many whole vessels as possible from the excavated sherds. Sherds from large vessels will often be better preserved and survive as larger fragments, resulting in more large vessel forms being reconstructed. Since only whole vessels (and a few of the unusual or interesting sherds) are usually published, published assemblages may thus be biased in favour of large vessel forms.

Another limitation of the scheme is that it does not allow for one vessel form to have been used for a number of different activities, or for the use of a number of vessel forms for one type of activity. However, bearing in mind that the scheme is well-supported both ethnographically and via limited residue analysis (Pope forthcoming), and as long as the limitations are fully recognised, it should prove a valuable exercise for comparing pottery assemblages based on what pottery was used for, rather than a study of pottery typology which divorces it from its main role in daily life.

7.3.4.1 The Scheme of Analysis

Figure 42 presents the scheme for functional pottery analysis applied in this study (Pope forthcoming). It provides an assessment of the varying degrees of vessel restriction and thus the ease of use in a hypothetical assemblage (ibid.):

Form 1 represents a vessel with maximum ease of access: rim diameter equals maximum diameter; vessel height is less than one third of vessel width; and the vessel has very limited walls.

Form 2 is slightly more restricted as, with the presence of vessel walls, height is now less than one half of vessel width.

Form 3 is a development of Form 1 but ease of access has decreased further as vessel height equals more than half of vessel width.

Form 4 is more restricted still, as the vertical walls provide decreased ease of access through the opening.

Form 5 represents a vessel where rim diameter is less than maximum diameter and access becomes restricted.

Form 6 is the most restricted vessel form where rim diameter is less than, or equal to, two-thirds of the maximum diameter and access is somewhat limited.

In summary then, vessel forms 1-4 are unrestricted, whilst 5 and 6 are restricted forms. Forms 1 and 2 can be termed *minimum restriction vessels*, Forms 3 and 4 *limited restriction vessels*, Form 5 a *medium restriction vessel*, and Form 6 a *maximum restriction vessel.*

These four main classes of vessel based on ease of access are linked to specific functions based on ethnographic studies. Believing that a positive relationship exists between vessel form and use: 'ceramic vessels within a general functional class are usually designed within definite, specifiable morphological limits' (Henrickson and McDonald 1983: 634), Henrickson and McDonald used 26 ethnographic case-studies in an attempt to verify the existence of generic functionally-determined vessel forms. Based on information derived from this study, four basic functional types were adopted by the scheme because of their parallels with the forms identified in the analysis of vessel restriction. These were vessels for serving, processing, cooking, and storage (Pope forthcoming):

Serving vessels Forms 1 and 2 - minimum restriction vessels - are taken to be vessels for the presentation/consumption of food because they provide easy access to and visibility of their contents (Rice 1987: 241).

Processing vessels Forms 3 and 4 - limited restriction vessels - were probably used for processing activities such as mixing, crushing and mashing. The unrestricted opening gives easy access to the contents and the high walls provide increased capacity as well as acting against splashing.

Cooking vessels Form 5 is a medium restriction vessel. A restricted opening helps prevent excess evaporation in cooking (Henrickson and McDonald 1983: 631) but must be large enough to prevent boilover (Smith 1985: 258).

Storage vessels Form 6 is seen as a dry/wet storage vessel, these are accessed less frequently than the other forms hence its greater restriction (Smith 1985: 261). The smaller opening also decreases the risk of contamination (Henrickson and McDonald 1983: 633), of spillage and also enhances the ease of closure (Rice 1987: 241). For these reasons this form may also have been used for liquid transport.

The scheme was applied to all the published or stored assemblages analysed from the late Iron Age sites in southern Jordan and Israel mentioned above (for an example of the recording sheet used see Figure 43; all recorded data can be found in Appendix 3). This was done separately on the 'Edomite' assemblages from sites in Israel to allow comparison with the overall site assemblage they stemmed from, as well as with each other and the Jordanian assemblages. Each vessel was assigned to a functional form on the basis of the relationship between vessel restriction, wall height, and width of body. The advantage of the scheme is that sherds may be included in the scheme as long as enough of the rim and shoulder of the vessel has been preserved, allowing the measurement of the relationship between the vessel's opening and its body. The scheme did not work well for cooking pots from this area and period, since most of these fell within the storage category based on their measured proportions. It was therefore decided to include all vessel forms whose fabric indicated their use for cooking in the cooking category. Not many reports include information on fabric, but since there are a number of standard cooking pot forms, confirmed by the few fabric studies that have been done, all of these were included under the cooking category. This does mean of course that shapes which do not occur commonly as cooking pots, and where the fabric is not indicated, may have been mistakenly attributed to another category.

The results of the analysis were put into graph form showing the percentage of the total assemblage that each form represented. To aid interpretation, two main factors were considered: the range of forms present and which activity categories were most (or least) predominant at all the sites analysed. The results of the functional ceramics analysis will be presented in Chapter 8.

7.3.5 Methodology: Vessel Form Analysis

Since very few 'Edomite' pottery assemblages or late Iron Age pottery assemblages in the southern Levant have been quantified in any way, a detailed analysis of vessel form was carried out based on form typology. This was undertaken to produce not only distribution maps of the relative frequencies of all the different vessel types occurring at the sites included in this analysis, but also to detect any possible patterns in the occurrence of particular vessel types with 'Edomite' pottery, in particular contexts, with particular small finds.

Since no generally agreed typological classification exists for late Iron Age pottery from southern Israel[2] (Mazar 1988: 125), and to make analysis feasible, it was decided to keep the classification of

[2] A few classificatory systems based on clearly defined criteria have been utilised (e.g. Tufnell 1953; McClellan 1975), but the vast majority of site reports and other publications on ceramics have relied, and still

vessel types as broad as possible. Vessels were first split into jars, jugs, bowls, kraters, and cooking pots. Within these categories all the various vessel forms that were encountered were given a short description and a code number (see Figures 44-61; all the codes used in the graphs in Chapter 8 refer to the codes and descriptions in these figures). The vessel forms occurring at each site were recorded according to these codes in Excel worksheets (all recorded data can be found in Appendix 4). The ceramic classification was based on common types defined and described in the literature and the descriptions used were based on those most commonly used in published reports. This applied to the majority of vessel forms encountered during data collection. For the vessels where this did not apply, descriptions were formulated by the author. Where possible these vessel forms are illustrated in Figures 49 to 61. However, for the vessel forms encountered during data gathering from unpublished collections, it was not possible to provide illustrations since permission for drawings was not granted. Oakeshott's (1978) more detailed classification of south Jordanian Iron Age pottery was used to categorise the 'Edomite' pottery found in both southern Israel and Jordan (see Figures 62-67). To make analysis feasible only Oakeshott's broad type codes were used. In this study subtype Bowl A1, for example, was included under the overall category Bowl Type A. Again, vessels were split into bowls, jars, jugs, kraters, and cooking pots, each of which were split into various coded form types. The vessel forms occurring at each site in southern Jordan and Israel were recorded, as above, in Excel spreadsheets (see Appendix 4).

Using the two-sample T-test in SPSS, the possible relationship between each non-'Edomite' vessel form type and the presence of 'Edomite' pottery was investigated. The numbers of each non-'Edomite' vessel type present at sites without 'Edomite' pottery were thus compared with the numbers of the same vessel type at sites with 'Edomite' pottery. The two-sample T-Test was applied since it allows comparison between two samples by evaluating the difference in means between two samples in light of the pooled standard deviations from both samples (Drennan 1996: 156; Fletcher and Lock 1994: 82-84). In other words, the T-Test enables the information from two samples to be pooled into a single statement of the probability that both could be selected from the same population. This allows the probability that the observed difference between two samples was just a consequence of the vagaries of sampling to be evaluated (Drennan 1996: 156). The T-Test assumes that both samples have approximately normal distributions and roughly similar spreads. To

do, on general descriptive terms to discuss the excavated pottery (e.g. Aharoni 1962; 1964a; Mazar *et al.* 1966; Sellers *et al.* 1968; Amiran 1969; Aharoni *et al.* 1973; Lapp 1981; Mazar 1982; Fritz and Kempinski 1983; Mazar and Mazar 1989; Gitin 1990; Mazar 1996; Zimhoni 1992; 1997; Freud and Beit-Arieh 1995; Freud 1999; Finkelstein *et al.* 2000b). It is clear from these examples that even recent reports do not seem to utilise generally agreed systems of classification and terminology concerning fabric descriptions, shape, decoration, colour, and manufacturing techniques. This is remarkable in light of the weight given to pottery typology in most interpretations.

test this for each sample, the normality plots and tests, and the Levene test in SPSS were applied to each sample (Norusis 1998: 91-106, 225). The application of statistical rather than tabular analysis for the detection of such a relationship was to achieve increased rigour and accuracy. However, for the statistically significant results, graphs were used to illustrate the relationship. In addition, the relationship between particular non-'Edomite' vessel forms in contexts with 'Edomite' pottery was investigated by comparing them to contexts without 'Edomite' pottery on the same site, and by comparing them to contexts with 'Edomite' pottery at other sites. This was again carried out using the two-sample T-test in SPSS. Similarly, the relationship between small finds and 'Edomite' pottery was analysed by comparing contexts with and without 'Edomite' pottery both at individual sites and between sites.

Pottery assemblages from the sites in southern Jordan and Israel included in this study were also compared to ascertain their relationship to each other. Firstly, the sites with 'Edomite' pottery in Israel were compared to the Jordanian sites. Secondly, all the Jordanian sites were compared to each other, as were the non-'Edomite' sites in Israel. And lastly, all the sites with 'Edomite' pottery in Israel were compared to each other. Graphs were used to illustrate any significant results.

For two of the Jordanian sites - Buseirah and Umm el-Biyara - contextual information was available. For three other sites in Jordan - Ghrareh, Khirbet Ishra, and Khirbet al-Megheitah - contextual information was available only for the pottery (see Appendix 1). The intra-site distribution of pottery forms from these sites was therefore analysed using distribution plots. These distributions could then also be compared between sites. The intra-site distribution of 'Edomite' pottery at four sites in southern Israel was also analysed using distribution plots. These sites included Tel 'Ira, Horvat Qitmit, Tel Malhata, and Horvat 'Uza. This was followed by inter-site comparison of these distributions. Lastly, the distributions in Israel were compared to those in Jordan.

7.3.6 Site Comparison Based on Survey Data

Originally, the intention was to include survey data from southern Israel and Jordan to place the excavated sites into context. In other words, it was intended that a detailed comparison of site size, type, and location would be undertaken. A comparison of the size of the excavated sites was possible and this was thus incorporated into a consideration of vessel type numbers presented in Chapter 8. However, more detailed considerations of environment, concerning both the excavated sites and those surveyed and still un-excavated in their wider surroundings, such as proximity to water, altitude, location within a valley or on a hilltop, geology, rainfall, and so on, were rendered

impossible by a lack of data available from published surveys. Although quite a number of surveys have been conducted in southern Israel (Kochavi 1972; Govrin 1991; Finkelstein and Magen 1993; Finkelstein and Na'aman 1994), the information provided by the publications of these surveys was not useful for the purposes of the present study. Generally, aside from the date and map location of a site, little further information was provided by these publications. In addition, maps were either too schematic, or if detailed, lacking a legend, so that details of a site's location and environment were impossible to gather (e.g. Govrin 1991; Finkelstein and Magen 1993). It was therefore decided to not include survey data from southern Israel.

A number of surveys have also been conducted in southern Jordan (Rast and Schaub 1974; Jobling 1981; 1983; Weippert 1982; Hart 1986; 1987b; MacDonald 1988; 1990; Lindner 1992). These surveys are however extremely variable in terms of the data collected, recorded, and published. Again, aside from the date and map location of a site, little further information was provided by these publications. In addition, maps were either too schematic, or information too sketchy, so that details of a site's environment and location were difficult to gather (e.g. Jobling 1981; 1983; Hart 1986; 1987b; MacDonald 1988; 1990). In addition, large parts of southern Jordan remain un-surveyed, especially the areas around the excavated sites included in this study. A meaningful comparison would thus not be possible and it was therefore also decided to not include survey data from southern Jordan.

7.3.7 Limitations of the Analyses

Before continuing with the data analysis, it is important to point out that there are some general disadvantages with the approaches to the data outlined above. Perhaps most importantly, the site as a whole plays no part in this investigation and that is to neglect a significant context for the pottery assemblages in question. Yet this is nothing new. Any previous work on the 'Edomites' that has used specific pottery types to prove the veracity of traditional 'ethnic' interpretations has also neglected the site context of those pottery types. In fact, as will be shown in Chapter 8, the pottery sherds in question are not very numerous and at all the sites where they were found a huge proportion of contexts do not contain this type of pottery. This illustrates just how selective scholars have been when compiling archaeological evidence for the 'Edomites' and how simple and limited artefactual parallels have been used to support broad generalisations about material culture patterns.

In addition, by comparing sites and levels from sites dated to the late Iron Age, variation in the pottery types present at all the sites included in this analysis has been interpreted as spatial rather than chronological, and attributable to factors such as consumption and social practice (see Chapters

8 and 9). Chronological causes for the degree of vessel form variation cannot be entirely ruled out however, but since the dating of many of the levels at sites used in this study is very broad and potentially based on questionable assumptions it is impossible to address this issue. Indeed, none of the levels or sites in question have been dated to the late Iron Age by scientific dating techniques. Rather, they have been dated by archaeological-historical parallelism. It cannot therefore be ruled out that chronology did play a potentially significant role in vessel form distributions. On present evidence this issue cannot be adequately explored however, and it will require further examination when more detailed chronological information becomes available. The current, generally accepted dating of the sites and levels used in this study has therefore been accepted, and any variation has been interpreted as geographical rather than chronological.

Finally, it must also be accepted that, by focusing on 'Edomite' and non-'Edomite' pottery types, the analysis presented in Chapter 8 is to some degree conforming to the debate it is also attempting to scrutinise. The same argument applies to the fact that this analysis uses the broad geographical areas of 'Jordan' and 'Israel', thereby dividing ancient remains by modern political criteria. However, this is only an investigation of the data to assess whether it may or may not support the idea of the 'Edomites' or whether more complex patterns are present. It is therefore not an attempt to investigate what was 'actually' happening. Such an investigation would require a detailed contextual analysis of every site before any general conclusions could be drawn. Second, given those aims, it is difficult to know what other geographical regions could have been used. Modern political boundaries are of no relevance in the late Iron Age and regions such as southern Jordan and Israel are also far from being clearly defined areas when examining archaeological remains, as can be seen from the distribution maps that will be discussed in Chapter 8. Indeed, these maps show that the assemblages examined concerning the idea of the 'Edomites' have usually been divided into those found to the west and to the east of the Wadi Arabah. However, it must be questioned whether the areas east and west of the Arabah can be considered unified regions archaeologically. Also, using the Arabah as such a rigid division is dubious as it may actually have been a regional focus of communication and interaction (Bienkowski 1999; forthcoming; Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001). It may therefore be more realistic to think of a south Levantine zone of interaction. However, that is just another region which, for the purposes of this analysis, is difficult to define. The following will therefore simply be a comparison of late Iron Age material culture from 'southern Jordan' and 'southern Israel'. Nevertheless, there will also be an examination of the evidence found within the various areas of these broad regions to investigate further the variations and complexities of the data. In other words, the potential differences (and similarities) of the material culture from sites within southern Jordan and Israel will be explored.

The implications of the points raised in this section are that the methodology and analysis proposed here can only be used as a critique of the 'Edomite' discourse in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. It cannot provide evidence on which to build an alternative view of the past. Yet the aim of the present work as a whole is not only to investigate that discourse, some alternative hypotheses will be presented in Chapter 9. There will however be no attempt to produce any definite conclusions concerning what was 'really' happening in the late Iron Age. As argued above, that would require a detailed contextual analysis of the dynamics of individual sites and their local environs *before* any general comments could be made. Not only would that be largely impossible based on the present data set, that project is far too big for the present study, which is only intended to be an initial step in the reassessment of 'Edomite' archaeology.

However, it must be emphasised that the aim of this study as a whole is also to use the current, flawed data to highlight the potential of alternative approaches to the material culture of the Iron Age southern Levant. The intention is thus to demonstrate the value and potential of new approaches and to influence future research strategies. So although it is clear that the data available for this study is flawed and that by implication the analyses undertaken in the present study are imperfect, the only alternative is to continue with traditional methods and to uphold the status quo. However, in previous chapters it has been clearly shown that these traditional methods are immensely problematic. So although imperfect, it is intended that the methods employed in this study will show that new approaches can provide new insights, and thus point the way for future work.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Data Analysis

8.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, a methodology for reassessing archaeological material usually linked to the presence of 'Edomites' in late Iron Age southern Jordan and Israel was outlined. This methodology is consistent with the theoretical position described in Chapters 6 and 7. The methodology involves the contextual and comparative analysis of a number of pottery types which are particularly relevant for the present study. Firstly, in the most recent typological/chronological publications these vessel types are dated to the late Iron Age and have been linked to the 'Edomites'. Secondly, they have been described as evidence for an 'Edomite' invasion or 'movement' of 'Edomites' to southern Israel. Indeed, this type of pottery has been found both in southern Jordan (seen traditionally as the 'Edomite homeland') and in southern Israel (where 'Edomite' people are said to have 'moved' to, either by invasion or trade). Because of this, these vessel types have always been, and remain, at the heart of archaeological investigations of the late Iron Age in southern Jordan and Israel.

4914 examples of so-called 'Edomite' pottery types from Israel and Jordan were examined; 2003 from Israel and 2911 from Jordan (see Appendix 4). In addition, 6269 sherds of standard late Iron Age pottery from Israel were analysed; 2903 from sites where 'Edomite' pottery has not been found and 3366 from sites where 'Edomite' pottery has been found. Compiling information on each of these sherds involved consulting published reports and collections in storage in the UK, Israel, and Jordan (see Appendix 1).

The aim of this chapter is to present the results of the contextual and comparative analysis of these 11183 sherds. Previous analyses of this pottery have rarely, if at all, taken any account of the contexts in which it was found (e.g. where it was being used, what other material was present etc.) and hence the details of the social practices in which this pottery played an important part have largely been ignored. In other words, it has therefore been the material itself, not the people using it, that has been the centre of attention. It is therefore intended that the contextual and comparative analysis of pottery so closely linked by traditional interpretations to 'the Edomites' will reveal new or more complex patterns and suggest that alternative means of understanding the material culture are necessary. The presentation of the results of these analyses will begin with a comparison of the

ceramic assemblages as a whole from southern Jordan with the assemblages of 'Edomite' pottery from southern Israel.

8.2 A Comparison of the 'Edomite' Pottery Assemblages from Southern Israel with the Pottery Assemblages from Southern Jordan

As an initial point, it is worth highlighting that considering the overall volume of evidence for the period in question (i.e. all those sites in Israel that are believed to date to the late Iron Age or have late Iron Age phases), there are not actually a large number of 'Edomite' sherds from southern Israel. Figure 68a shows the overall number of 'Edomite' sherds alongside the number of standard late Iron Age pottery sherds at the sites in Israel for which the quantity of both of these assemblages is known. Figure 68b shows the proportion made up by the 'Edomite' pottery in these assemblages. Only at Qitmit is the percentage of 'Edomite' pottery substantial, forming just under 40% of the assemblage. At Malhata the percentage of 'Edomite' pottery is also slightly higher than the other sites, forming just over 20% of the assemblage. At the remaining sites however, the percentage of 'Edomite' pottery is markedly lower. Unfortunately, this comparative data was only available for the sites shown in the graph. Information about the proportions at En Haseva, Masos, Aroer, Tel Sera', and Tel Haror was unavailable. It should be emphasised that the amount of standard late Iron Age pottery that was published/recorded for the remaining sites might well be higher than is shown on this graph. This is because not all the sherds that were excavated were published and/or quantified (see Appendix 1). Bearing this in mind, as well as the fact that since 'Edomite' pottery counts as a 'special' or 'unusual' find it will have been quantified/published more completely, the proportion made up by 'Edomite' pottery at these sites may well be even less than indicated by Figure 68b. This leads to the interesting conclusion that, if there was a substantial invasion, migration, or movement of people through trade, should not - according to the culture-historical model of culture - a larger number of exact material culture parallels be evident?

Of the 'Edomite' pottery types used in the present study (as defined in Chapter 7), a total of 4914 examples were recorded. The numbers of each type in Israel are given in Figure 69, with Bowl D (= BD) being the largest group (395 examples = 20%) and flasks (F) and double bowls (DB) being the smallest (just 1 example each = 0.05%). As mentioned above, of the 4914 sherds, 2003 were recorded for Israel and 2911 for Jordan. As might thus be expected, Figure 70 shows that a wider range of vessel forms is represented in Jordan (20 bowl types instead of 17 in Israel; 5 cooking pot types instead of 4; 12 jug types instead of 4; and 8 jar types instead of 2) and that in most cases more examples of each type are found in Jordan. When considering these numbers as percentages of

the total number of sherds in each region, most vessel types make up a higher proportion of the overall assemblage in Jordan than in Israel.

However, regarding Bowl Types D, J, and P, as well as Cooking Pot Type A, the situation is slightly different. The number of Bowl Type D is greater in Israel than in Jordan at 395 as compared to 383 in Jordan. The number of Bowl Type J is also greater in Israel than Jordan at 372 in contrast to 169 in Jordan. And lastly, the number of Bowl Type P is also greater in Israel than in Jordan at 280 versus 39 in Jordan. When considering these numbers as percentages of the total number of vessels in each region, Bowl Types D, J, and P form the highest proportion of the total assemblage in Israel (at 20%, 19%, and 14% respectively; see Figure 71). In Jordan however, apart from Bowl Type D which also makes up the highest proportion of the total pottery assemblage (at 13%; see Figure 72a), Bowl Type P forms only a small proportion of the assemblage (at 1%; see Figure 72a), while Bowl Type J forms a broadly similar proportion of the assemblage to Bowl Types B, F, G, and T (at 6%, 7%, 5%, 6% respectively; see Figure 72a). As might be expected due to the high proportion of the total assemblage made up by Bowl Types D, J, and P in Israel - apart from Bowl Type B which forms a similar proportion of the total assemblage in both Israel and Jordan - most of the remaining bowl types make up a higher proportion of the total assemblage in Jordan than they do in Israel. Concerning Cooking Pot A, the frequency of this vessel type is again higher in Israel than in Jordan at 339 versus 187 (see Figures 69 and 70b). When considering these numbers as percentages of the total number of vessels in each region, in Israel this type of cooking pot makes up 17% of the assemblage, while in Jordan it makes up only 6% (see Figures 71 and 52c). Cooking pots may in actual fact have made up a larger proportion of the Jordanian assemblage, since recording methods may again have affected the numbers available for this study (see Appendix 1). Since cooking pots are coarse and not deemed as noteworthy or interesting as painted bowls, they may have been recorded or kept in fewer numbers than 'finer' wares. This would significantly alter the proportions of an assemblage, but unfortunately there is no way of knowing the complete numbers of the assemblages that were excavated.

8.2.1 Summary

According to culture-historical theory, which equates material culture to ethnic groups, the presence of 'Edomite' pottery in southern Israel signifies the presence of 'Edomites' through invasion, migration or trade. As was already questioned, if this were the case, would not a larger number of exact material culture parallels be evident? In addition, according to the normative interpretation of culture as employed in previous interpretative models of 'Edomite' archaeology, the assemblages in Israel and Jordan should be the same. Archaeologists have until now simply taken the mere

presence of 'Edomite' pottery as an indication of an 'Edomite' presence in some form. There has been little study of the actual assemblages that have been found. As the initial appraisal above of the assemblages of this pottery from Israel as compared to those in Jordan shows, the picture is much more complex than implied by the normative model that has been applied. Indeed, only certain types of 'Edomite' pottery are found in Israel. Not only is it a restricted range, but the quantities of particular types are far greater in Israel than in Jordan and make up a far greater proportion of the assemblages. The same type of pottery is thus found in both Israel and Jordan, but that is as far as the parallels go. Only specific types are found and in very different proportions to Jordan. The picture becomes even more complex when the 'Edomite' assemblages from Israel are compared to each other.

8.3 A Comparison of the 'Edomite' Pottery Assemblages in Israel

On the basis of the data that was available for analysis, some interesting patterns have become apparent. Overall, bowls followed by cooking pots form the overwhelming majority of 'Edomite' vessel types found in Israel (73% and 18% respectively, versus 3% made up by 'Edomite' jug forms and 2% by 'Edomite' jar forms; see Figures 69, 73, and 74). Some jar and jug types are found, but in extremely small quantities. In addition, jars and jugs are only found at a few sites (this will be discussed in more detail below) whereas most of the bowl forms and Cooking Pot Type A are found at almost all the sites in Israel where 'Edomite' pottery was found. In contrast, although bowls form a large proportion of the overall assemblage in Jordan (63%; see Figures 72 and 74), other vessels cover the full spectrum of types with each vessel type making up much more balanced proportions of the total assemblage than in Israel (12% jugs, 16% jars, and 9% cooking pots; see Figures 73 and 54). The differences between the assemblages of 'Edomite' pottery in Israel and Jordan proved to be statistically highly significant at the 0.1% level when subjected to the chi-squared test (despite the use of percentages above, the test was carried out on absolute numbers).

In addition, within the bowl and cooking pot categories in Israel, four specific vessel types make up a striking proportion of the total assemblage. There are significantly higher proportions of Bowl Types D, J, and P, as well as Cooking Pot A than any other vessel types (at 20%, 19%, 14%, and 17% respectively). Indeed, together these four vessel types form 70% of the total assemblage. Apart from Bowl Types A, B, and F (at 2%, 8%, and 4% respectively) all other vessel types represent less than 2% each of the total assemblage. Most other vessel types are therefore either not represented in Israel at all, or very little, and only a very few in similar proportions to Jordan.

A closer investigation of the distribution of 'Edomite' pottery types also reveals some interesting patterns. Although bowls form the vast majority of 'Edomite' vessels found at sites in Israel, within this overall vessel form, Figures 75 and 76 illustrate that individual types of bowls occur in varying numbers at the sites in question. Most bowls occur at En Haseva and/or Qitmit apart from the double bowl (1 example) and Bowl Type M (2 examples) which have been found at Arad and Beersheba respectively. There are however quite a number of differences between the bowl types that are found at Qitmit and Haseva (see Figures 79 and 80). Qitmit for example, has relatively high numbers of Bowl Types A, D, J, P, and Q, while Haseva has not. Haseva in contrast has relatively high numbers of Bowl Types B, E, F, G, H, K, N, and O, which Qitmit has not. They have approximately equal numbers of Bowl Type L. In terms of bowl types, although the relatively high numbers at one site do not equal their absence at the other and vice versa, the repertoire represented at Qitmit and Haseva differs substantially.

Figures 81 to 89 show that there are also substantial differences in the 'Edomite' vessel types found at all the other sites in southern Israel. To discuss this in more detail, Figures 75 to 78 show the distribution of specific vessel forms at sites in Israel. Firstly, Figure 75a shows that Bowl Type A occurs in relatively high numbers and at a number of different sites. Indeed, Bowl Type A was found at 5 out of 11 sites. By far the largest number was found at Qitmit, where 45 examples were excavated. All other sites had between 3 and 9 examples of this vessel type. Figure 75b shows that Bowl Type B occurs in high numbers at Haseva, where just under 120 examples were found. Qitmit produced just under 40 examples, and the remaining 4 sites where Bowl Type B was found revealed under 5 each. Figure 75c shows that Qitmit and Haseva again produced the most examples of Bowl Type D: 125 and just over 250 respectively. Very small numbers of Bowl Type D were also found at 2 other sites (see Figure 75c). Bowl Type E was only found at Haseva, where 7 examples were found (see Figure 75d). Again, the vast majority of Bowl Type F was found at Haseva where 65 examples were excavated (see Figure 75e). The remaining 3 sites where Bowl Type F was found produced between 1 and 2 examples each. Haseva again produced the only examples of Bowl Types G and H, at 22 and 9 examples respectively (see Figures 75f and 75g). Figure 75h shows that Bowl Type J was found at all sites except for Sera. By far the most were excavated at Qitmit, where 251 examples were excavated. The remaining 9 sites produced between 5 to 50 examples each. Figure 76a shows that Bowl Type K was also found at quite a number of sites, except four, including Qitmit. The largest number of Bowl Type K, but not overwhelmingly so, was found at Haseva. Bowl Type L is also a commonly occurring vessel, but seems to have been found at only those sites where a relatively larger amount of 'Edomite' pottery has been found (see Figure 76b). These sites include En Haseva, Qitmit, 'Uza, Beersheba, 'Ira, and Malhata. Bowl Type L was found only in relatively small quantities at these sites however. Only two examples of Bowl Type M were found

at Beersheba (see Figure 76c). Bowl Type N again occurs fairly commonly, but at a different range of sites to Bowl Type L (see Figure 76d). By far the largest number of Bowl Type N was found at En Haseva, as opposed to between 1 and 4 examples at Aroer, Beersheba, Malhata, and Masos. Figure 76e shows that Bowl Type O is found at only four sites in relatively small quantities. Between 1 and 3 examples were found at Aroer, Haseva, Beersheba, and Haror. Although Bowl Type P only occurs at Qitmit, approximately 275 examples of it were found (see Figure 76f). Bowl Type Q occurs only at Qitmit and Malhata and 1 double bowl was found at Arad (see Figures 76g and 76h). To summarise, it should be noted that to some extent these figures are clearly a function of absolute numbers. Nevertheless, it is interesting that some forms are very widely distributed, while the distribution of others is concentrated at only a few sites. Especially interesting is the fact that some forms do not show the same concentration at Qitmit and Haseva that other forms do.

Turning now to jug types, Beersheba has the highest number of jugs deemed to be 'Edomite' out of all 11 sites at which 'Edomite' pottery has been found. Jug Types A (6 examples), E (2 examples), and Flasks (1 example) are only found at Beersheba and nowhere else (see Figures 77a, 77d, 77e). Jug Type D is found at 'Ira as well as Beersheba, but at none of the other sites (see Figure 77c). And finally, Jug Type B is only found at two completely different sites again, En Haseva (47 examples) and Malhata (1 example; see Figure 77b). Jugs are thus relatively infrequent at Qitmit and Haseva. Jar Type A is the only late Iron Age Jordanian Jar form to be found in Israel, and it was excavated only at En Haseva (41 examples; see Figure 77f) and possibly at Malhata[3] (2 examples, see Figure 77f).

Cooking Pot Types B (7 examples; see Figure 78b) and D (6 examples; see Figure 78d) were only found at En Haseva. Cooking Pot Type C however was not found at Haseva at all and only at Qitmit (2 examples; see Figure 78c) and Arad (2 examples; see Figure 78c). In contrast, Cooking Pot Type A occurred at 5 sites including Arad, Haseva, Qitmit (50 examples), Uza, and Malhata. The vast majority were found at En Haseva however (250 examples; see Figure 78a).

8.3.1 Summary

According to the normative interpretation of archaeological remains as employed in previous interpretative models of 'Edomite' archaeology, the assemblages within Israel should not only be similar to those in Jordan, but similar to each other. This is clearly not the case, although current

[3] The recording of vessel forms for Malhata was done from drawings only. For some distinctive shapes a rim profile is sufficient, but for Jar Type A this is not the case. It may well be therefore, that the jars identified as Jar Type A at Malhata are in fact other jar or jug forms which could not be identified accurately.

archaeological practices mask this fact. Archaeologists have until now simply taken the mere presence of so-called 'Edomite' pottery as an indication of an 'Edomite' presence in some form. Little attention has been paid to the fact that the assemblages of 'Edomite' pottery from Israel in fact differ a great deal from each other. The discussion above has made it clear that sites have a very particular assemblage of vessels; some vessel forms only occur at one or two sites and nowhere else. In addition to the variable distribution of bowl forms described above, the overwhelming majority of jug types for example were found at Beersheba, and jars only occurred at Malhata and En Haseva. Even more striking are the differences in the assemblages from the sites where a relatively large amount of 'Edomite' pottery was found. The differences between the assemblages from En Haseva and Horvat Qitmit described above are extremely interesting in this respect.

So far, studies that have addressed the 'Edomite' pottery in Israel have treated the pottery as a homogenous unit, where its presence or absence indicates a single meaning: the presence or absence of 'Edomites' (e.g. Mazar 1985; Beit-Arieh 1995a; 1999; see also Chapter 3). The focus has thus been on the degree to which cultural traits are shared. Indeed, since in these studies culture is defined as an entity which can be equated with past ethnic groups, it has served, to quote Shennan again:

> '... emove the untidiness in the cross-cutting distributions, rather than taking the more radical step of recognizing that this untidiness is, in fact, the essence of the situation, arising from the fact that there are no such entities as 'cultures', simply the contingent interrelations of different distributions produced by different factors' (Shennan 1989: 13; see also Chapter 6).

These studies have thus had the effect of masking differences and treating together phenomena which would be discrete under other methods of analysis.

It is thus clear that the complexities of the material culture from the late Iron Age in southern Jordan and Israel must be recognised. Thus far, the removal of 'untidiness' has been achieved by the creation of a number of 'diagnostic' types which uphold the ideal of the univariate cultural block of culture-historical archaeology (see Chapter 6). This has created a false image of uniformity.

8.4 Vessel Form Comparison Jordan

Previous comparisons of the pottery assemblages from Iron Age Jordan have had as their main aim to distinguish chronological phases on the basis of the presence or absence of particular pottery types (e.g. Hart 1989; 1995). Recently however, these differences have been recognised as

potentially regional rather than purely chronological (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001: 27; Bienkowski 2001a; forthcoming). Therefore, an attempt has been made here to quantify these differences. However, it must be emphasised that due to the unrepresentative nature of most of the assemblages in question - either due to their poor excavation and recording methods or due to restricted areas of excavation - caution is necessary when considering the results. Nevertheless, since quantification of the material that *is* available has so far not been undertaken this exercise may still provide some valuable information. It should be added that the comparative analysis below is based on the number of examples of all the main vessel forms as classified by Oakeshott (1978) present at all the sites in southern Jordan for which sufficient information was available concerning their ceramic assemblages. Detailed typological comparison was not attempted since this has already been undertaken comprehensively elsewhere (Oakeshott 1978; Hart 1989). It is worth noting however, that different krater types occur in the southernmost reaches of south Jordan as opposed to the northern part. Similar differences occur regarding jar forms (Bienkowski forthcoming; 2001a).

To take into account the difference in size of the various assemblages, the proportion that each vessel type made up within each separate site assemblage was compared. Bowl, jar, jug, and cooking pot forms will be discussed separately below. Since there are a great deal more bowl types than any other vessel form, to ease analysis each individual bowl type has been discussed by comparing one site to another starting with Buseirah and Ghrareh.

8.4.1 Bowl Types

8.4.1.1 Ghrareh and Buseirah

Concerning almost all bowl types, Figures 90 to 92 show that the proportion they make up of the assemblage at Buseirah is greater than at Ghrareh. There are however some exceptions. At 20% versus 9%, Bowl Type D makes up almost twice as much of the assemblage at Ghrareh than it does at Buseirah. Similarly, Bowl Type F makes up over twice as much of the assemblage at Ghrareh than at Buseirah at 7% versus 3%. The difference in proportion made up by Bowl Type G at both sites is even more striking at 12% at Ghrareh and a mere 1% at Buseirah. These differences were statistically significant at the 0.1% level when subjected to the chi-squared test. The proportions made up by Bowl Types J, K, and N were also slightly higher at Ghrareh than Buseirah, at 7%, 4%, and 4%, versus 5%, 2%, and 3% respectively. Using a chi-squared test these differences were statistically significant at the 10% level. Ghrareh also had a slightly higher proportion of Bowl Type H, although proportions were virtually the same at both sites. All bowl types were present in

varying proportions at Buseirah. At Ghrareh however, Bowl Types E, M, P, Q, R, S, and double bowls were completely absent.

8.4.1.2 Ghrareh and Tawilan

Concerning bowl types at Tawilan and Ghrareh, Figures 90 to 92 show that the situation is more complex. A similar range of bowls to Ghrareh was absent from Tawilan as well. Bowls M, P, R, S and double bowls were all absent from both sites. However, some bowl types absent from Ghrareh were present at Tawilan, and vice versa. Bowl Type Q for example makes up a tiny percentage of the assemblage at Tawilan, while it is completely absent from Ghrareh. Similarly Bowl Type E makes up 1% of the assemblage at Tawilan, while it is not represented at Ghrareh at all. At Ghrareh however, Bowl Types H and O make up a small percentage of the overall assemblage while at Tawilan they are completely absent. For the bowl types that do occur at both sites, seven out of eleven times they form a greater proportion of the assemblage at Ghrareh than they do at Tawilan (Bowl Types B, C, D, F, G, J, K). Using the chi-squared test these differences are statistically significant at the 5% level. Only the proportions of Bowl Types A, L, N, and miscellaneous bowls are higher at Tawilan than Ghrareh at 5%, 4%, 11%, and 9%, versus 1%, 1%, 4%, and 1% respectively. Using the chi-squared test these differences were shown to be not statistically significant.

8.4.1.3 Buseirah and Tawilan

Again, at Buseirah all bowl types are represented to some degree, but at Tawilan some forms are absent. To reiterate, Bowl Types H, M, O, P, R, S, and double bowls are absent from Tawilan, but present at Buseirah. Figures 90 to 92 show that of the 13 out of 20 bowl types that are represented at both sites, 7 bowl types are present in higher proportions at Tawilan. Bowl Types D, F, G, J, L, N, and miscellaneous bowls make up 15%, 6%, 4%, 6%, 4%, 11%, and 9% respectively at Tawilan, and 9%, 3%, 1%, 5%, 2%, 3%, 7% at Buseirah. Five bowl types are represented in higher proportions at Buseirah and one is equal. Bowl Types A, B, C, E, and Q, make up 8%, 11%, 6%, 3%, and 1% respectively at Buseirah, while they make up 5%, 4%, 1%, 1%, and 0.3% at Tawilan. Bowl Type K makes up 2% in both assemblages. Using the chi-squared test the differences between the assemblages at Tawilan and Buseirah were shown to be statistically significant at the 0.1% level.

8.4.1.4 Umm el-Biyara and Tawilan

Figures 90 to 92 show that a number of bowl types are also completely absent from Umm el-Biyara, namely Bowl Types A and C. The only other two sites these are absent from are Khirbet Ishra and Khirbet al-Megheitah (and Kheleifeh, but this is not necessarily meaningful as explained above). In addition, Bowl Types C, G, O, P, Q, R, and double bowls are not found at Umm el-Biyara. In terms of Bowl Type G, Umm el-Biyara is the only site where no examples have been found. Regarding the absence of Bowl Type O, this is the same as Tawilan. Bowl Type P and R are absent from Ghrareh and Tawilan as well, and Bowl Type Q is absent from Ghrareh and Umm el-Biyara, but not Tawilan. Of the 9 out of 20 cases where the bowl type is represented at both sites, 7 bowl types made up a higher proportion of the assemblage at Tawilan than they did at Umm el-Biyara. Bowl Types D, E, J, K, L, N, and miscellaneous bowls represented a higher percentage of the total assemblage at Tawilan at 15%, 1%, 6%, 2%, 4%, 11%, and 9% respectively, versus 9%, 0.3%, 5%, 1%, 2%, 1%, and 2%. The remaining two Bowl Types B and F made up a higher proportion at Umm el-Biyara than Tawilan at 7% and 7% respectively, versus 4% and 6%. Using the chi-squared test these differences between the assemblages at Tawilan and Umm el-Biyara were shown to be statistically significant at the 1% level.

8.4.1.5 Umm el-Biyara and Ghrareh

Figures 90 to 92 show that Bowl Types A, C, G, and O are all absent from both Ghrareh and Umm el-Biyara. Bowl Types E, M, and S are absent from Ghrareh but not from Umm el-Biyara where they are present in small quantities. Interestingly, in the case of Bowl Types M and S which are absent from the majority of other sites as well, Umm el-Biyara forms the only site along with Buseirah where these Bowl Types are represented. Bowl Type E is only represented at Umm el-Biyara, Buseirah and Tawilan. Bowl Types P, Q, R, and double bowls are absent from both Umm el-Biyara and Ghrareh. Of the 9 out of 20 bowl types that are present at both sites, 3 bowl types represent a greater proportion at Umm el-Biyara than Ghrareh. Bowl Types B, L, and miscellaneous bowls form only a slightly higher percentage of the assemblage at Umm el-Biyara than they do at Ghrareh. Not surprisingly, using the chi-squared test these differences were shown to be not statistically significant. Four bowl types make up a greater percentage of the assemblage at Ghrareh than Umm el-Biyara. Bowl Types D, J, K, and N make up 20%, 7%, 4%, and 4% respectively at Ghrareh versus 9%, 5%, 1%, and 1% at Umm el-Biyara. These differences were shown to be statistically significant at the 10% level using the chi-squared test. Bowl Types F and H are represented equally at both sites at 7% and 1% respectively.

8.4.1.6 Umm el-Biyara and Buseirah

Of the 20 bowl types that are represented at Buseirah, 8 are absent from Umm el-Biyara. As mentioned before and as Figures 90 to 92 show, Bowl Type A is absent, as well as Bowl Types C, G, O, P, Q, R, and double bowls. Interestingly, Bowl Types M and S which are absent from all other sites apart from Buseirah, are also represented at Umm el-Biyara, albeit as a very small proportion of the overall assemblage. Of the 12 bowl types that are represented at both sites, Bowl Types B, E, K, N, S, and miscellaneous bowls make up a higher proportion of the assemblage at Buseirah than they do at Umm el-Biyara. These differences were statistically significant at the 10% level when subjected to the chi-squared test. In contrast, Bowl Types F and H make up a higher proportion of the assemblage at Umm el-Biyara than at Buseirah (this difference was statistically significant at the 0.1% level when subjected to the chi-squared test), and Bowl Types D, J, L, and M all form equal percentages of their respective assemblage.

8.4.2 Jar Types

Turning now to jar types, Figure 93 shows that all jar types are only represented at Buseirah. In three cases, Buseirah is the only site where certain jar forms are represented. Indeed, Jar Types C, E, and F can only be found at Buseirah. Furthermore, 2 jar forms, Jar Types B and D are only found at Buseirah and Umm el-Biyara. The only jar form that is represented at most sites is Jar Type A which is found in varying proportions at Ghrareh, Khirbet Ishra, Tawilan, Umm el-Biyara, and of course Buseirah. Since a variety of jar shapes are represented at Buseirah it is to be expected that the proportion of Jar Type A is smaller at Buseirah than most other sites. Indeed, the proportion of Jar Type A is greater at Ghrareh, Tawilan and Umm el-Biyara, with Umm el-Biyara showing the greatest percentage of Jar Type A at almost 20%, versus 5% at Buseirah, almost 15% at Ghrareh, 3% at Ishra, and 6% at Tawilan.

Jar forms that did not fit into any of the clear categories as defined by Oakeshott are represented by the category Miscellaneous Jars in Figure 93g. Vessels that could not be clearly identified as either a jug or a jar since too little of the whole vessel survived are categorised as Jar/Jugs in Figure 93h. Although from Figures 93a to f it becomes clear that hardly any of these jar types are represented at Megheitah, and that considering the size of Tawilan, jars form a surprisingly small percentage of Tawilan's assemblage, Figures 93g and 93h reveal that most of the jar forms at these two sites cannot be classified according to Oakeshott's system. This might hint at local production of jars at these sites. Figure 93g shows that miscellaneous jars form the majority of the jar assemblage at Tawilan and Figure 93h shows that vessels that are either jars or jugs form a further 1% of

Tawilan's assemblage. At Megheitah a similar picture emerges. Figure 93g shows that vessels that could be either jars or jugs form the majority of the jar/jug assemblage at Megheitah, with miscellaneous jars forming a further 5% of the assemblage. All the graphs considered together reveal that jars form the largest part of the assemblage at Umm el-Biyara.

8.4.3 Jug Types

Figures 94 and 95 show that as with bowls and jars, Buseirah is the only site where all jug types are represented to some degree. In fact, concerning Jug Types D, F, G, and H it is the only site where these jug forms are found. In addition, Jug Type J is absent from all sites apart from Buseirah and Tell el-Kheleifeh. As might be expected since more types are represented at Buseirah than any other site, the proportion made up by the remaining jug types is smaller at Buseirah than it is at the other sites. Indeed, Jug Types A, B, C, E, flasks and bottles form a higher percentage of most other assemblages than Buseirah.

Overall however, it is only Jug Types B and C that occur at all sites. Jug Type B makes up between 2 and 5% of all assemblages except for Umm el-Biyara where it makes up 15% of the assemblage. Similarly with Jug Type C, at 4% it represents the largest proportion of all the assemblages at Umm el-Biyara, since at the remaining sites it makes up between 1 and 3% of the assemblage. Overall, jugs form the highest proportion of the assemblage at Umm el-Biyara. Of the jug forms that occur less commonly (Jug Type E, flasks, and bottles), these are found mostly at Tawilan, Umm el-Biyara and Tell el-Kheleifeh. No other jug forms apart from Jug Types A, B, and C are found at Ghrareh, Khirbet Ishra, and Khirbet al-Megheitah.

8.4.4 Cooking Pot Types

Figure 96 shows that once again, all cooking pot forms are represented only at Buseirah. Indeed, Cooking Pot Type E is only found at Buseirah and Cooking Pot Type C is only found at Buseirah and Kheleifeh. Cooking Pot Types A and B are clearly the most common cooking pot forms, occurring at all sites. Most striking however, is the preference for Cooking Pot Type A at some sites and Cooking Pot Type B at others. Overall, cooking pots do not form a large percentage of the overall assemblage at Buseirah. At sites such as Ghrareh, Megheitah, Ishra, and Umm el-Biyara, they form a much higher percentage of the overall assemblage. At Tawilan also, considering its size in relation to these smaller sites, cooking pots also do not form a very large proportion of the overall assemblage. The proportions made up by cooking pots at the very small assemblages such as at Megheitah and Ishra are of course exaggerated by this fact. Taking this into account, the large

proportions made up by cooking pots at Umm el-Biyara and Ghareh are striking. Interestingly, although the assemblage from Tell el-Kheleifeh cannot be used in direct comparison of proportions, the largest number of cooking pot types at a single site other than Buseirah are represented at Tell el-Kheleifeh. Both at Tawilan and Ghrareh only three of the five types have been found and at the remaining sites only Cooking Pot Types A and B are present.

8.4.5 Other Sites in Jordan

A number of other sites in Jordan have been surveyed or have had limited soundings excavated. These include Jabal al-Qseir, Es-Sadeh, Baja III, and Khirbet al-Mu'allaq, which are all 'mountain-top' sites. In addition, some limited excavation was undertaken at Ash-Shorabat, located to the south of the Wadi el-Hasa. Since the pottery from these sites derives from survey and/or soundings, it was considered of limited comparative use and was therefore not included in the tables above. However, for the sake of completeness the pottery found at these sites has been included in a set of separate graphs.

Figure 97 for example shows that only a very limited range of pottery types is reported from the mountain-top sites, something which has already been noted by a number of scholars (Zeitler 1992; Lindner *et al.* 1996a; Lindner *et al.* 1996b), but the significance of which has been little explored. Overall, a similar range of pottery in approximately similar proportions is found at all of these sites, although of course some differences may be noted. It is of interest that the pottery types represented all fall within the coarser wares. None of the finer wares that are found at Buseirah and Tawilan for example, have been found at these sites. In addition, painted pottery is extremely rare in contrast to Buseirah and Tawilan for example, with only a few examples of bowls with simple painted bands having been found.

Figure 98 shows that the types of pottery and their proportions differ somewhat at Ash-Shorabat from the sites in Figure 97. Far more types are represented at Ash-Shorabat and more cooking pots are found. Again, it is noticeable that the vessel forms represented are all coarse wares. No fine wares and very few decorated vessels were found. In this respect, the sites of Khirbet al-Megheitah and Khirbet Ishra are similar. On the whole, far more coarse vessel types are represented, and far less of the finer wares. Painted decoration is also less common at these sites (see section 8.7 below for a more detailed discussion of this).

8.4.6 Summary

The discussion above demonstrates that the distribution of pottery types in southern Jordan differs substantially from site to site. The composition of the assemblages from site to site in Jordan thus varies substantially. As the largest site, and because Oakeshott's classification was largely based on the Buseirah ceramics, it is to be expected that all the pottery types are represented to some degree at Buseirah. This is clearly not the case at all the other sites. Figure 99 shows that the sites with the least amount of types represented, also as might be expected due to their small size, are Khirbet al-Megheitah and Khirbet Ishra. It also shows that after Buseirah, regarding cooking pot forms and jugs, the most types are represented at Tell el-Kheleifeh. Concerning jars, the most types are represented at Umm el-Biyara after Buseirah. Glueck recorded and kept no jars at Tell el-Kheleifeh. Whether this is a reflection of reality, or his methods at the time is not certain. It would not seem unreasonable however, to suspect that a number of jar types were present at Tell el-Kheleifeh. Taking this into account, the most variation in the total number of vessels types after Buseirah is probably at Kheleifeh, closely followed by Umm el-Biyara. This is confirmed by a comparison between the total number of types recorded at Kheleifeh and Biyara, and the total number of sherds analysed. It is interesting however, that although Umm el-Biyara is less than half the size of Kheleifeh, the same number of types are present at both sites. The number of types recorded at Ghrareh is also noteworthy, although the size of Ghrareh may have been overestimated due to the limited excavations carried out there.

In addition to variation in vessel type, some broad vessel forms predominate at some sites and not others. The discussion above shows that bowls clearly predominate at Buseirah in comparison to the other sites (see also Figure 100). Figure 100 also shows that jugs and jars clearly predominate at Umm el-Biyara in contrast to the other sites. For such small sites as Khirbet Ishra, Khirbet al-Megheitah, Ash-Shorabat, and the mountain-top sites, coarse wares predominate and very little painted ware is found.

According to the normative interpretation of culture as employed in previous interpretative models of 'Edomite' archaeology, the assemblages within Jordan should be similar to each other, since they reflect the same ethnic group. Thus far, archaeologists have simply taken the mere presence of 'Edomite' pottery as an indication of an 'Edomite' presence in some form. However, little attention has been paid to the fact that the late Iron Age pottery assemblages in Jordan in fact differ a great deal from each other.

The analysis of Iron Age vessel form distributions above has clearly shown that the material culture patterning in southern Jordan is much more complex than has been previously assumed. Indeed, all the sites in question have a very particular assemblage of vessels, with some vessel forms only occurring at one or two sites and nowhere else. Thus far, studies that have addressed the Iron Age pottery of southern Jordan have focused on the degree to which cultural traits are shared. This has had the effect of removing 'untidiness' and creating a number of 'diagnostic' types which uphold the ideal of the univariate cultural block of culture-historical archaeology with which to equate ethnic groups, as in the case of studies of southern Israel. However, the comparison of site assemblages in southern Jordan clearly reveals substantial material culture variation. Current archaeological practices and interpretative models applied to the archaeology of southern Jordan thus clearly mask this variation and disregard the possibility of local and temporal variations in the meaning and active, contextual usage of material culture.

8.5 Vessel Form Comparison of the Non-'Edomite' Pottery Assemblages from Southern Israel

Due to the vastly greater number of vessel types present in southern Israel, as well as the fact that no formal classification of these vessel forms is in general use (Mazar 1988: 125; see also Chapter 7.3.5), a comparative analysis of standard late Iron Age vessel forms from southern Israel was extremely complex. To facilitate analysis, the various vessel types were therefore split into different groups to try and detect patterns. Firstly, vessels were split into bowls, jugs, jars, cooking pots, and kraters. These vessel categories were then subdivided into various individual types. For each site, the numbers present of any of the vessel types was recorded. This was the first step in an attempt to quantify the distribution of vessel forms in southern Israel. All other comparative analyses that were carried out were based on this initial division of the vessel forms. The first of these was a statistical test undertaken to investigate whether there were any differences in the distribution of non-'Edomite' pottery forms at sites where 'Edomite' pottery had been found versus those where none had been found.

8.5.1 T-Test Analysis

The 16 assemblages from southern Israel for which sufficient information was available on the number of vessel forms present were split into two groups. One group of assemblages was from sites where 'Edomite' pottery had been found, and the other was from sites where none had been found. For each individual vessel type there were thus two groups of numbers: the amounts of that particular type present at all the sites where 'Edomite' pottery had been found, and the numbers of

that particular type at all the sites where none had been found. These two groups (there were ten sites in the group where no 'Edomite' pottery had been found and six in the group where 'Edomite' pottery had been found) were then compared using the two-sample T-Test in SPSS. The aim was to calculate if there was a statistically significant difference between the numbers of particular vessel types at sites where 'Edomite' pottery had been found, and where none had been found.

Concerning the bowl, jug, and krater forms there were no statistically significant results. However, concerning some jar forms and one cooking pot form there were some results. More specifically, a comparison between the numbers of Cooking Pot Form Code II and Jar Form Codes II, VI, IX, and XXXI (see Figures 44-61 for the description of the codes and vessel forms) that occurred at sites where 'Edomite' pottery had been found, and where none had been found, showed significant results. These were not *statistically* significant however. For the T-Test to be valid, the data must conform to a normal distribution. Unfortunately, the data concerning the cooking pot and jar forms did not conform to a normal distribution, mostly due to a lack of data. Therefore, the results of the T-Test on these pottery forms were not statistically meaningful.

Despite there being no statistically significant differences in the pottery forms published and recorded for sites where 'Edomite' pottery was found and sites where none had been found, the distribution of particular pottery forms at all the sites in question was still investigated. Despite the differences not being statistically significant, it is still of value to note the presence or absence of particular types at sites as well as their relative abundance.

8.5.2 The Distribution of Non-'Edomite' Vessel Forms at Sites in Southern Israel

The aim of this comparison was to quantify the differences in the types of vessel forms found at all the sites in southern Israel that have been implicated in 'Edomite' archaeology. These sites include those generally attributed to the state of Judah: Abu Tuwein, Beth Zur, En Gedi, Gezer, Hurvat Shilhah, Jerusalem, Lachish, Ramat Rahel, Tell Beit Mirsim, and Tell el-Ful. Naturally, the sites where 'Edomite' pottery has been found were also included: Horvat Qitmit, Horvat 'Uza, Tel Arad, Tel Beersheba, Tel 'Ira, Tel Malhata, Aroer, Tel Haror, Tel Sera', and Tel Masos. Apart from Tel Sera' and Tel Haror, which are often classified as southern 'coastal' sites, all the sites where 'Edomite' pottery has been found are located in the Beersheba Valley. In total, twenty sites were therefore included in this analysis.

As explained above, to facilitate this analysis, all the published assemblages or assemblages available for recording in collections were divided into broad vessel forms: bowls, jars, jugs, bowls,

and kraters. The vessel forms in these broad categories were then further sub-divided into specific vessel forms. Each different vessel form encountered was classified by a brief description and assigned a vessel form code. The bowl form code was indicated by 'B', the krater form code by 'K', cooking pot forms by 'CP', jar form codes by 'Ja', and jug forms by 'Ju'. Since the vessel form information was stored in spreadsheets in Excel, to avoid the vessel form codes being taken for mathematical formulas, the codes were recorded in roman numerals. For each site 5 spreadsheets recorded the number of each jar, jug, cooking pot, krater, and bowl form that occurred. To analyse the distribution of these vessel forms Figures 101 to 105 collate this spreadsheet information for all 20 sites. As can be seen from these Figures, a total of 37 jug forms, 50 jar forms, 48 bowl forms, 14 krater forms, and 15 cooking pot forms were noted for the 20 sites in question.

Before presenting the results, it must be noted that for the sites where vessel forms were recorded from collections rather than publications, more variation in vessel forms was recorded. This is probably because the handling of a vessel, rather than just an image of it, reveals more detail and thus more differentiation than a drawing. The great number of single vessel types present at Tel Malhata, Horvat 'Uza, and Tel Arad can be explained in part by this and are therefore not taken as significant in every instance. Where this is the case, it will be indicated in the discussion below. It should further be noted, that an absence of certain vessel forms at particular sites may not necessarily mean that it was actually absent. Especially for Tel Sera' and Tel Haror, where the collections available for consultation were extremely limited and difficult to work with; Aroer, where only one publication of the pottery has appeared which is very limited and where the excavated material was not available for consultation; and lastly Tel Masos, where again the final publication of the ceramic assemblage was extremely limited, it is not possible to know with accuracy what forms were or were not present on site (for all of these sites see Appendix 1).

8.5.2.1 Bowl Forms

Figure 101 instantly shows that a number of vessel forms are extremely common and occur at almost all sites, and in most cases in fairly substantial quantities. This is the case with bowl forms BI, BIV, BVII, BXVI, BXX, BXXXVI, BXXXVII, and BXXXXV. However, bowl form BI does not seem to occur at Haror, although the point about the limited information available for the ceramic assemblage at Haror mentioned above means that this absence may not necessarily be meaningful. Concerning Horvat Qitmit it is also of interest that even though this site produced a large number of bowls, 88% of the non-'Edomite' bowl forms are made up of bowl form BI. Bowl form BIV was not found at Abu Tuwein, Horvat Qitmit, Beersheba, Arad, Aroer, and Tel Haror. At all other sites apart from Gezer and Shilhah it is present in some quantity. Bowl form BVII is absent

from even more sites: Beth Zur, Jerusalem, Ramat Rahel, Tel Beit Mirsim, Tel el-Ful, and Tel Haror. At the remaining sites it is found, but in not very great numbers. Only at Tel 'Ira and Tel Sera' is it found in greater quantity. Bowl form BXVI is found in reasonably large numbers at quite a few sites, but again at some sites it has not been found: Abu Tuwein, Shilhah, Qitmit, Aroer, Haror, and Masos. Bowl BXX is again found in quite large numbers at 14 sites, except for Abu Tuwein, Beth Zur, Gezer, Aroer, Masos, Sera'. BXXXVI occurs in fairly large numbers, but only at 10 sites. It is absent from Abu Tuwein, Beth Zur, Shilhah, Qitmit, 'Uza, Tell el-Ful, 'Uza, Malhata, Aroer, and Masos. Bowl form BXXXVII is again fairly common, occurring at 17 out of 20 sites and in fairly large quantities. The only sites from which it is absent are Haror, Aroer, and Shilhah. Lastly, bowl form BXXXXV occurs at only 7 sites, but where it does, it is in reasonable quantities. It is only present at Abu Tuwein, Beth Zur, Gezer, Shilhah, Jerusalem, Tel el-Ful, 'Ira, and Haror.

Of the bowl forms that are not present at many sites, only those that occur in any quantity (i.e. above 1) will be discussed. The very striking results will be discussed first. Bowl form BV for example, occurs only at Ramat Rahel and Malhata. At Ramat Rahel 90 examples are found, and only 1 at Malhata. At Beersheba, 13 examples of bowl form BXXIX are present, in contrast to only single examples at Arad, 'Uza, Ramat Rahel, and Beth Zur. Bowl form BXXXXIII is only found at Qitmit where 11 examples were found. The same applies to bowl form BXXXXIV, of which 5 examples were found. Bowl form BXXXXVII is present only at Gezer, where 7 examples were found. There are also a few bowl forms that are present at between 2 to 4 sites only and in fairly small quantities. This is the case with bowl forms BII, BVI, BXVIII, BXIX, BXXV, BXXXII, BXXXX, and BXXXXVI.

The discussion above has demonstrated that substantial variation exists in the bowl forms present at the sites that were analysed. It has already been shown that there is no statistically significant difference in the numbers of particular bowl forms that occur at the sites where 'Edomite' pottery has been found and at the sites where none has been found. Instead, the distribution is immensely complex, with certain types occurring only at particular sites and not others. The variation thus exists at the level of individual sites or groups of sites. Especially the types that occur fairly commonly are interesting in this respect. Although they occur at a great number of sites, they are also absent from a few key sites. This is especially the case with bowl forms BVII, BXVI, BXX, BXXXVI, and BXXXXV. The bowl forms that occur in relatively large numbers at only one or two sites are also of interest, in particular bowl forms V, BXXIX, BXXXXIII, BXXXXIV, and BXXXXVII.

8.5.2.2 Jar Forms

Figure 102 shows that a number of jar forms occur commonly and in relatively large numbers. These include jar forms JaI, JaII, JaVI, JaVIII, JaX, JaXXXIV, and JaXXXVI. Jar form JaI is absent from 5 out of 20 sites, including Abu Tuwein, Beth Zur, Shilhah, Ramat Rahel, and Tel Beit Mirsim. It is however present at all of the sites where 'Edomite' pottery has been found. JaII is absent from 12 out of 20 sites. At the sites where it is present, it occurs in relative small numbers apart from Malhata and Beersheba where 14 and 18 examples respectively were found. JaVI is again found at a great many sites. It is absent only from Abu Tuwein, Tel Beit Mirsim, Qitmit, Beersheba, Haror, and Sera'. Jar form JaVIII occurs at half of all the sites included in this analysis. It is absent from Abu Tuwein, Beth Zur, Gezer, Shilhah, Jerusalem, Ramat Rahel, Tell el-Ful, Qitmit, Haror, and Sera'. Jar form JaX is only absent from 5 sites: Abu Tuwein, Qitmit, 'Uza, Aroer and Haror. Jar form JaXXXIV is absent from 8 sites: Shilhah, Ramat Rahel, Tel Beit Mirsim, Qitmit, Malhata, Aroer, Haror, and Sera'. And lastly, jar form JaXXXVI is present at 9 sites, but only in some quantity at Beersheba and 'Ira.

Of the less common types, some occur in large numbers at a limited number of sites. For example, jar forms JaIV, JaV, JaXXII, JaXXX, JaXXXVII, JaXXXXVII, and JaXXXXX. Of jar form JaIV for example, 66 examples were found at Qitmit and only 1 other at Malhata. Of jar form JaV 24 examples were found at Lachish, 11 at Malhata, and only 1 other at 'Ira. Jar form JaXXII is present predominantly at Qitmit again, where 15 examples were found. One other example of this jar form was found at Malhata. Jar form JaXXX is found only at Tel el-Ful and 'Uza, where 24 examples and 1 example respectively were found. Nine examples of jar form JaXXXVII occur at Arad with single examples at Lachish and Jerusalem. Four examples of jar form JaXXXXVII were found only at Tel Beit Mirsim in addition to five at Tel 'Ira. And lastly, 9 examples of jar form JaXXXXX were found only at En Gedi.

Similar to the bowl forms, the patterns revealed by Figure 102 show that there is a great deal of variation in the distribution of jar forms at sites in southern Israel. It has already been shown that there is no statistically significant difference in the numbers of particular jar forms that occur at the sites where 'Edomite' pottery has been found and at the sites where none has been found. Instead, the distribution is immensely complex at the level of individual sites and groups of sites, with certain jar types occurring only at particular sites and not others. Especially the jar forms that occur in relatively large numbers at only one or two sites are of interest, in particular jar forms JaIV, JaV, JaXXII, JaXXX, JaXXXVII, JaXXXXVII, and JaXXXXX. The jar types that occur fairly commonly are also interesting. Although they occur at a great number of sites, they are also absent

from a few key sites. This is especially the case with jar forms JaI, JaII, JaVI, JaVIII, JaX, JaXXXIV, and JaXXXVI.

8.5.2.3 Jug Forms

Turning now to jug forms, Figure 103 shows that there are a number of forms that occur more commonly than others. These include JuI, JuII, JuIII, JuXX, JuXXI, and JuXXXIV. Jug form JuI is only absent from 4 sites (Abu Tuwein, Tel Beit Mirsim, Haror, and Sera') and at the sites where it is present it occurs in relatively large numbers. Jug form JuII is absent from 7 sites, including Abu Tuwein, Beth Zur, Gezer, Shilhah, Ramat Rahel, Qitmit, and 'Uza. However, at the sites where it is present, it is so in lesser quantities to JuI. Jug form JuIII is found at only 9 sites, but at most sites – except Malhata, Aroer, and Sera' where only 1 example occurs at each site – it is present in relatively large quantities. Jug form JuXX is again extremely common, and is absent from only 4 sites including Abu Tuwein, Gezer, Qitmit, and Tel Masos. Similarly, jug form JuXXI is only absent from 6 sites and is present in relatively large quantities at the sites where it does occur. JuXXXIV is present only at 9 sites, and in especially large quantities at Lachish and Beersheba.

When comparing Figures 101 to 103 it becomes immediately clear that the distribution of jug forms at sites in southern Israel is a lot less limited than the distribution of bowl and jar forms. In other words, individual sites show a much wider range of jug forms - or a larger part of the total range - than is the case for bowl and jar forms. Indeed, many of the jug forms are found at a greater number of sites, and in larger quantities, than most of the bowl or jar forms. There are therefore a great many jug forms that, even though they cannot be said to occur commonly, are present at between 4 to 7 sites. This is not the case for bowl and jar forms. Nevertheless, there are some jug forms that occur at only one or two sites in any quantity. Jug form JuIV for example, is present at 6 sites and occurs in relatively large numbers only at Qitmit (27 examples) and in smaller quantities at Beth Zur (5 examples), Lachish (2 examples), Malhata (1 example), Aroer (1 example), and Haror (1 example). In addition, a striking quantity of jug form JuXXXVII is present at Abu Tuwein (20 examples), while the only other site where this jug form is found is Tel Haror with only 3 examples.

Similar to the bowl and jar forms, the patterns revealed by Figure 103 show that there is a great deal of variation in the distribution of jug forms at sites in southern Israel. Again, there is no statistically significant difference in the numbers of particular jug forms that occur at the sites where 'Edomite' pottery has been found and at the sites where none has been found. Instead, the distribution is immensely complex at the level of individual sites and groups of sites. At the same time however, in contrast to bowl and jar forms, it is clear that a larger part of the total range of jug forms is

represented at sites in southern Israel. Nevertheless, certain jug forms occur in relatively large numbers at only one or two sites, such as jug forms JuIV and JuXXXVII.

8.5.2.4 Cooking Pot Forms

The distribution of cooking pot forms presented in Figure 104 reveals some interesting patterns. Cooking pot forms CI, CII, CIII, CIV, and CV are very common and occur at between 8 to 14 sites. Cooking pot form CI for example, is absent only from Abu Tuwein, Beth Zur, Tel Beit Mirsim, Tel Beersheba, Tel Haror, and Tel Sera'. At all other sites relatively large quantities are found. A similar pattern is revealed for cooking pot forms CII, CIII, CIV, and CV. Figure 104 shows very clearly that particular combinations of cooking pots were being used at different sites. Tel Beersheba is a good example of this. The very common Cooking Pot Types CI and CII are absent from Beersheba, and instead cooking pot forms CIII and CIV are present in large quantities. In addition, large numbers of Cooking Pot Type CVIII are found at Beersheba but at no other sites. Similarly at Lachish, where cooking pot forms CI to CV are all present, cooking pot CXIV is present in large quantities although it does not occur at any other site apart from Tell el-Ful where 6 examples are found. Again at Tell el-Ful, in addition to the presence of cooking pot forms CI to CIV and CXIV, 8 examples of cooking pot CXV are found only at this site. At Abu Tuwein, only cooking pot CIII is present. At Beth Zur cooking pots CII to CIV occur, as well as 8 examples of CXIII which is present nowhere else except for Tel Sera' where 2 were found. At Shilhah, the vast majority of cooking pot forms belong to form CI, except 1 example of CII.

In summary, Figure 104 demonstrates that only particular types of cooking pot were found at each site. Indeed, at some sites specific cooking pot types were found that were not found anywhere else. A number of local traditions are thus potentially apparent in the use of cooking pots.

8.5.2.5 Krater Forms

Figure 105 reveals that the most common form of krater is form KII which is found at all sites except Gezer. However, it may well be present at Gezer as well, since this vessel form is the larger form of the common bowl form with a folded rim (Bowl Form BI). In some cases it is a fine line which determines what is a large bowl or a small krater. The number of these kraters (or large bowls) may therefore in actual fact be very different, depending on the criteria used for recording. Only the very noticeably larger 'bowls' were recorded as kraters for this analysis. No other krater form occurs as commonly as krater form KII, but the remaining data show some interesting features. Most of the other types of krater seem to occur at only 1 or 2 sites. The most striking of

these are krater forms KIV, KX, and KXI. Krater form KIV occurs predominantly at Beersheba where 26 examples were found, 1 possible other example is present at Malhata. At Qitmit, 32 examples of krater form KX are present, and absent from all other sites. And lastly at Beersheba, 13 examples of krater form KXI were found, a form which is absent from all other sites. In addition, krater forms KIII, KV, KVI, KVII, KXII, and KXIV all occur in relatively low numbers and at a limited number of sites.

Figure 105 thus shows that specific krater types are in use at a number of sites, and not at others. Indeed, in a number of cases a specific krater form is unique to one site. Similar to cooking pots, it would thus appear from the krater data that there are very local traditions of vessel use.

8.5.3 Summary

According to the normative interpretation of culture as employed in previous interpretative models of 'Judahite' archaeology, the late Iron Age ceramic assemblages within southern Israel should be similar to each other since they are equated with one ethnic group. The discussion above has clearly shown however, that the assemblages of late Iron Age pottery from southern Israel in fact differ a great deal on an intra-site basis. Indeed, some vessel forms only occur at one or two sites and nowhere else. In addition to the variable distribution of bowl and jug forms described above, certain krater types are for example only found at Beersheba and Qitmit, particular types of cooking pot only at Lachish and Beersheba, and specific jar types only at En Gedi.

Figure 106 also shows some interesting results for the number of different vessel forms represented at sites in southern Israel. At Horvat Qitmit 19 different vessel types are represented, as compared to the much larger sites of Beth Zur and Ramat Rahel where a similar number of vessel types occur. Similarly, at the relatively small site of En Gedi 37 types are represented, in comparison to the relatively large sites of Gezer, Jerusalem, Tell Beit Mirsim, and Tell el-Ful, where similar numbers of different vessel types were also found. Clearly, the variation in vessel form cannot be explained simply by site size. However, it should be born in mind that the sample size at some of these sites may have influenced these figures (especially at Horvat Qitmit). Related to this point is that although chronological causes for the degree of vessel form variation cannot be entirely ruled out, the fact that single-phase sites like Horvat Qitmit, the area at Tel Masos dated to the late Iron Age, and Horvat 'Uza, do not show a more limited range of types than much larger multi-phased sites such as Beth Zur and Ramat Rahel, indicates that variation in the range of vessel types does not seem to be linked to chronology *per sé*. However, because the dating of many of the levels at sites used in this study is very broad and potentially based on questionable assumptions, it cannot be

ruled out that chronology did play a potentially significant role in vessel form distributions. On present evidence this issue cannot be adequately explored however, and it will require further examination when more detailed chronological information becomes available.

Nevertheless, based on present evidence, the substantial and complex variation in vessel distribution, as well as the differences in the number of vessel types in use at sites regardless of their size or longevity, points to specific local conditions of existence at each site, involving different activities and potentially different practices. It is thus clear that the complexity of material culture patterning in late Iron Age southern Israel must be recognised, since the comparison of site assemblages has clearly revealed substantial local variation in the utilisation of material culture. It is therefore too simplistic to refer to and interpret late Iron Age assemblages from southern Israel as 'Judahite' since this implies the existence of a homogenous, monolithic material culture block with a single meaning. Indeed, the ceramic evidence points to a highly diverse situation, not readily susceptible to one overarching explanation. There is thus relatively little evidence to support the notion of ethnicity as the interpretative framework for this pottery. Furthermore, such an approach overlooks the possibility of local and temporal variations in the meaning and active, contextual usage of material culture. Since similar conclusions were reached concerning the 'Edomite' pottery found in southern Israel and Jordan, this suggests that the late Iron Age pottery assemblages of the southern Levant represent a selective adoption of certain ceramic forms in circulation at that time. A more detailed discussion of these conclusions and their implications for Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant will be presented in Chapter 9.

8.6 Functional Ceramics Analysis

Functional Ceramics Analysis (FCA) was undertaken on four bodies of material. Firstly, the 'Edomite' pottery assemblages from sites in Israel. Secondly, the pottery assemblages from sites in Jordan. Thirdly, the non-'Edomite' assemblages from the sites in Israel where 'Edomite' pottery has been found. And lastly, the assemblages from sites in Israel where no 'Edomite' pottery has been found. The results of the FCA on the 'Edomite' pottery are shown in Figures 107 and 108. The results of the FCA on the assemblages from Jordan are shown in Figure 109. Figure 110 shows the results of the FCA on the non-'Edomite' assemblages from the sites in southern Israel where 'Edomite' pottery has been found. And lastly, Figures 111 and 112 show the results of the FCA on the assemblages from sites in southern Israel where no 'Edomite' pottery was found. The meaning of the form codes used can be found in Chapter 7.3.4.1.

To facilitate analysis, the results of the FCA have also been presented in tables that represent them in hierarchical form (see Figures 113a to 113d). The activity represented by the highest proportion of pottery in a site's assemblage is represented by 1, the second highest proportion by 2, the third by 3, and the fourth by 4. Figure 113d shows that the highest proportion of 'Edomite' pottery at most sites falls into the serving category (form codes 1 and 2). The only exception is En Haseva where the highest proportion of the 'Edomite' pottery falls into the cooking category (form code 5). In addition, it is interesting to note that of the sites that have storage (form code 6) as a second or third category ('Uza, Beersheba, and 'Ira), this consists of a krater at 'Uza and jugs at Beersheba and 'Ira. Apart from En Haseva and Malhata where storage as a third category was represented by jars (although the uncertainty regarding the identification of Jar Form A at Malhata has already been noted), storage at 'Uza, Beersheba, and 'Ira is represented by vessel forms which could potentially also be related to serving. The jug forms especially represent fairly elaborate jugs (at 'Ira) and small bottles particularly at Beersheba, neither of which are common coarse jug forms.

The FCA results for Jordan paint a similar picture. Figure 113c shows that the highest proportion of the assemblages there fall into the serving category as well. It must be noted however, that for both the 'Edomite' pottery in Israel and the pottery in Jordan, this is potentially closely related to breakage rates. The only exception is Umm el-Biyara where the highest proportion of the assemblage falls into the storage category. The cooking category comes third at most sites, apart from Tawilan and Kheleifeh, where it comes fourth. It must be emphasised however, that the pottery report from Kheleifeh is so unrepresentative of the pottery that was excavated there, that it cannot be taken into account in analysis. It has been included only for the sake of completeness. Processing comes fourth in all cases apart from Tawilan where it comes third.

For the non-'Edomite' pottery excavated at sites in Israel where 'Edomite' pottery was found, the results are rather different. Figure 113b shows that of the six sites where enough information was available regarding both the non-'Edomite' and the 'Edomite' assemblages, at only two sites the highest proportion of the assemblage fell into the serving category. Serving came first only at Qitmit and 'Uza. The highest proportion of the assemblages from the remaining four sites fell into the storage category. Cooking came third in all cases except at 'Ira and Qitmit, where processing came third.

Figure 113a shows that at six of the ten sites in southern Israel where no 'Edomite' pottery was found at all, the highest proportion of the respective assemblages falls into the storage category. The highest proportion of the assemblages from the remaining four sites falls into the serving category.

At six sites cooking came third and processing fourth, at the remaining four sites processing came third and processing fourth.

Overall, it is noticeable that processing does not form a high proportion of any of the assemblages. This may be because the pottery vessels used for processing were not recognised as such by the analytical method used here. It may also be because vessels made from other materials that do not survive well in the archaeological record, such as wood, basketry, and metals, were used for this activity. Cooking in most cases formed the third highest proportion of assemblages at sites, except the 'Edomite' assemblages where cooking came second along with storage.

Concerning the serving and storage categories, an interesting pattern was revealed. Regarding both the 'Edomite' assemblages from Israel and the assemblages from Jordan, the highest proportion of the pottery from fifteen out of seventeen assemblages fell into the serving category. The highest proportion of the pottery from only two out of seventeen assemblages fell into the storage category. Furthermore, concerning the non-'Edomite' assemblages from the sites in southern Israel where 'Edomite' pottery has been found and the sites where none has been found, the highest proportion of the pottery from ten out of sixteen assemblages fell into the storage category. The highest proportion of the pottery from the remaining four out of sixteen sites fell into the serving category. This is almost an exact reversal of the FCA results for the sites with 'Edomite' pottery. Using the chi-squared test this difference was shown to be statistically significant at the 1% level.

In summary, despite the significant degree of variation that exists in the assemblages from southern Jordan, which implies that this pottery was being drawn upon variously by different communities for potentially different reasons, serving as an activity was clearly very important (bearing in mind the potential biases of these results due to breakage rates). In addition to cooking, the same can be said for the assemblages of 'Edomite' pottery from southern Israel. This is in complete contrast to the non-'Edomite' ceramic assemblages where storage constitutes the most important activity. The potential implications of these results will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

8.7 Decoration Analysis

Figure 114 shows the numbers of denticulated and painted 'Edomite' sherds that have been found at sites in Jordan and Israel. The seven sites in Jordan are to the left on the x-axis and the sites in Israel on the right. The graph demonstrates that painted pottery occurs at all of the sites in Israel and Jordan. However, painted vessels are extremely rare in Jordan at Khirbet al-Megheitah, Khirbet Ishra, Ghrareh, and Umm el-Biyara. Denticulated pottery again occurs at most of the sites in Israel,

except for Haror and 'Uza where only painted sherds were found. In Jordan however it occurs much less frequently, denticulation is only found at 3 out of 7 sites. It is absent at Umm el-Biyara, Ghrareh, Khirbet Ishra, and Khirbet al-Megheitah. Denticulated decoration thus forms a greater proportion of the assemblages in Israel than in Jordan. Furthermore, Figure 115 shows that the proportion of decorated pottery as a whole at sites in Israel is greater than at sites in Jordan. The small amount of 'Edomite' pottery excavated and published from sites in Israel compared to the complete site assemblages from Jordan must however be taken into account concerning these results. Indeed, due to the lack of publication of many of the 'Edomite' ceramic assemblages excavated in Israel, the proportions of decorated pottery may in fact be different. On present evidence however, the proportion of decorated 'Edomite' pottery at sites in Israel is greater than at sites in Jordan.

8.8 The Distribution of Pottery 'Styles' in the Southern Levant

In addition to 'Edomite' pottery, there are a number of other pottery styles that are distributed variously at sites in the southern Levant. These include so-called 'Midianite' pottery, 'Negevite' pottery, 'coastal' pottery, 'Cypro-Phoenician' pottery, 'Assyrian' pottery, and of course 'Judaean' pottery. Figure 116 shows the distribution of these pottery styles. This map demonstrates that a great number of different pottery styles were in use in the southern Levant during the late Iron Age and that their distributions were very widespread. In addition, much of this pottery was locally produced. Neutron activation analysis (NAA) and petrographic analysis of the 'coastal', 'Judaean', 'Edomite', and 'Negevite' pottery from Beersheba, Horvat Qitmit, and sites in the Negev discovered by the Negev survey, has clearly shown that these types of pottery were being locally made (Gunneweg and Mommsen 1990; Singer-Avitz 1999; Haiman and Goren 1992). 'Midianite' pottery does however seem to have been produced elsewhere, but further research still remains to be done on this type of pottery (Rothenberg and Glass 1983). In addition, a consideration of fabric indicates that some 'Assyrian' style pottery was being locally produced (Prof. E. Oren pers. comm.) but again, further research remains to be done on this subject. The same applies to the 'Cypro-Phoenician' wares.

In addition to the local production of many of these ceramic forms, these pottery styles tend to occur only in a limited range of shapes. 'Negevite' pottery consists of simple open shapes, with flat bases and plain rims. 'Cypro-Phoenician' wares are characterised by small juglets (although a large krater of this style was found at Tel 'Ira), 'coastal' pottery consists mainly of kraters and cooking pots, while 'Midianite' pottery includes mainly highly decorated bowls and jugs. Lastly, 'Edomite' pottery includes mainly cooking pots and bowls. It is clear that for a potentially wide variety of

reasons, only a limited range of shapes was being selected from the overall repertoires of these ceramic types. In addition, these pottery styles were being adopted variously at different sites. This complex patterning, in addition to the fact that much of this pottery was being locally produced, thus points to a highly diverse situation, not readily susceptible to one overarching explanation. Indeed, this wide range of pottery styles that was being drawn upon variously by the communities living in the late Iron Age southern Levant forms the context within which 'Edomite' pottery needs to be understood. Rather than forming an isolated phenomenon, 'Edomite' pottery potentially formed one component of this 'mix'. The implications of these ideas will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

8.9 Contextual Analysis

8.9.1 Small Finds

Information on small finds was available for Horvat Qitmit, Tel Malhata, Horvat 'Uza, and Tel 'Ira in Israel, and Buseirah and Umm el-Biyara in Jordan. Due to the immense variation in small find types, objects were divided into 15 different broad categories to facilitate analysis. These were: weaponry, implements/tools, weaving remains, jewellery, weights, zoomorphic figurines, anthropomorphic figurines, stone vessels, decorative elements/'art', 'cult stands', seals/seal impressions, coarse stone, shells, incense stands, and ostraca/inscriptions. All the small finds were recorded according to their context number in these categories. The context numbers were then divided into two groups, those from sites in Israel and those from sites in Jordan. The two-sample T-Test in SPSS was carried out on these two groups to see if there were any statistically significant differences between the numbers of small finds from contexts at sites in Jordan and sites in Israel where 'Edomite' pottery has been found. Since no usable information on small finds was available for sites in southern Israel where no 'Edomite' pottery has been found, a comparison between the small finds in contexts at sites with 'Edomite' pottery and contexts at sites without any 'Edomite' pottery was not possible. However, a comparison between the contexts with 'Edomite' pottery and those without, from the sites in southern Israel where 'Edomite' pottery has been found, was possible. The results of the comparison between the small finds from sites in Jordan and Israel will be presented first.

Unfortunately, there were no significant results for the comparison between the contexts in Israel and Jordan. Moreover, due to the fact that there was only data available from two sites in Jordan, the data was not sufficient to make a meaningful comparison. Figures 117 to 131 show the total counts of the small find categories of the sites in Israel and Jordan. The sites in Israel are to the left

on the x-axis and are marked in black, while the sites in Jordan are to the right on the x-axis and are marked in grey. Although these graphs cannot show anything statistically meaningful, they do show the different numbers of particular categories of small find at different sites.

Weaponry is for example found at Buseirah in far greater quantities than it is at any other site. At Malhata and Umm el-Biyara the most small finds falling into the category of implements/tools were found. The greatest number of small finds related to weaving were found at Umm el-Biyara. The most jewellery was found at Malhata, the second greatest quantity was found at Umm el-Biyara. The most weights were found at Buseirah and Malhata, and the most zoomorphic figurines at Qitmit and Malhata. None at all were found from Uza and Umm el-Biyara. By far the most anthropomorphic figurines were excavated at Qitmit, with smaller, equal numbers from 'Ira, Malhata and Buseirah. At Buseirah and Malhata, approximately similar numbers of stone vessels were found, while none at all were excavated at Qitmit, Uza, and Umm el-Biyara. Decorative elements/'art' were found in the greatest quantity at Umm el-Biyara, where large amounts of bone or shell inlay was found. As expected, the greatest number of so-called 'cult stands' were found at Qitmit, although some examples of the fenestrated stands were also found at Buseirah. Buseirah produced by far the largest number of seals/seal impressions, and Umm el-Biyara produced the most coarse stone as well as shells. Incense stands were again only found at Qitmit and Buseirah, the greatest number at Qitmit. And lastly, ostraca/inscriptions were found mainly at sites in Israel, with just a few at sites in Jordan. As a general observation, the variations in the amount and types of small finds at both the sites in Israel and Jordan do not go in step with each other, which indicates that the variations may not simply be a function of site size. At a very general level, these findings thus hint at different patterns of activity at these sites.

There were no significant results for the comparison between contexts from sites in southern Israel with 'Edomite' pottery in them versus the contexts without this pottery at sites where this pottery had been found. A lack of data meant that first of all many of the distributions of the data did not conform to a normal distribution, and secondly the T-Test did not produce significant results for any of the small find categories.

8.9.2 Non-'Edomite' Pottery

For each context from the sites in Israel for which contextual information was available, the number of broad vessel types that were present was recorded. This meant that for each individual context, the number of bowls, jugs, jars, cooking pots, and kraters was recorded to allow comparison. The contexts were then split into contexts in which 'Edomite' pottery had been found, and those

without, and these numbers were subjected to the two-sample T-Test in SPSS to see if there were any significant differences in the type of vessel form present in the contexts with 'Edomite' pottery and those without.

Unfortunately, there were no significant results for this analysis. This was due to the data not conforming to a normal distribution, which makes the T-Test invalid. Any potentially significant results were thus rendered meaningless because of a lack of data, or data that was skewed.

8.9.3 Intra-Site Distribution of Pottery and Small Finds at Sites in Israel

Distribution maps were produced of the 'Edomite' pottery, the non-'Edomite' pottery, and the small finds excavated at three sites in southern Israel for which sufficient data was available. These sites include Horvat Qitmit, Tel 'Ira, and Tel Malhata. Since Tel Malhata has not yet been published, no overall site plan was available, nor were there any plans of the areas with individual loci. Therefore, the distribution of 'Edomite' and non-'Edomite' pottery, as well as small finds, is given by area only. An hypothetical site layout was used to facilitate the graphic representation of these distributions (see Figures 132 and 133). It must be emphasised therefore, that this is not the actual layout of the excavated areas at Tel Malhata.

Concerning Horvat Qitmit, Figure 134 represents the distribution of 'Edomite and non-'Edomite' pottery. The plan shows that there is a distinctive clustering of Cooking Pot Type A in Loci 24 and 17. In addition, Bowl Types A, B, D, J, and P cluster in locus 30. Bowl Type J however, also occurs in higher numbers in Area B. In addition, Bowl Type P clusters in Locus 17. As was discussed above, Bowl Type P does not commonly occur at sites in either Israel or Jordan, making this an interesting feature. All other vessel and sherd forms do not demonstrate any distinctive clustering in particular areas. The distribution of non-'Edomite' pottery forms shows that by far the most non-'Edomite' bowl forms were found in Locus 30. 34 bowls were excavated there, versus 19 in Area B and 18 in area AI. Non-'Edomite' jar forms clustered in Locus 17. Non-'Edomite' cooking pot forms were found in fairly even and low numbers across the site. Interestingly however, none at all were found in Locus 24 where there was a clustering of 'Edomite' cooking pots. This may not be significant however, since two non-'Edomite' cooking pot forms were found in Locus 17 where the most 'Edomite' cooking pots were found. The largest number of jugs was excavated in Locus 16, and kraters/basins do not show any distinctive patterning.

Figure 135 represents the distribution of small finds at Horvat Qitmit. This figure clearly shows that there is distinctive clustering of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines in Loci 30 and 44.

Locus 30 also shows a clustering of 'cult stands', although a smaller group of these is also found in Locus 24. Tools and implements are only found in Area B and Locus 17, and ostraca are only found in Area B. A small cluster of objects related to jewellery is also visible in Locus 30.

In summary, the most 'Edomite' bowl forms by far were excavated in Locus 30. In addition to this, distinctive clustering of 'cult stands' and anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines also occurs in this locus. The cluster of 'Edomite' cooking pots in Locus 24 is accompanied by a smaller cluster of 'cult stands' and anthropomorphic figurines. Through these distribution maps, distinctive patterns of use and/or deposition of material culture at Horvat Qitmit are apparent. The clustering of cooking pots in particular areas separate from the clusters of bowls, jugs, and jars for example, may hint at different activity areas within the site or potentially different depositional practices. The same might be said of the overwhelming numbers of figurines and 'cult stands' that cluster in loci 30 and 44.

Turning now to Tel 'Ira, Figures 136 to 138 represent the distribution of 'Edomite' and non-'Edomite' pottery in Areas A, B, C, and E of that site. Firstly, a comparison between all of these areas, represented by Figure 139, shows immediately that by far the most 'Edomite' pottery has been excavated in Area E. This is also the area that has produced the most non-'Edomite' pottery forms, as well as the most small finds (see Figures 140, 141, and 142). The high proportion of 'Edomite' pottery in these areas is therefore not necessarily significant, but rather the result of larger sample sizes. Figure 136 first of all shows that one example of an 'Edomite' Jug D was found in Area A. The distribution of non-'Edomite' pottery forms reveals no distinctive clustering. Figure 137 shows that two 'Edomite' Bowls J were excavated in Locus 330 in Area C. This locus is however not marked on the plan of Area C published in the final report. This prevents further meaningful discussion of the pottery in this area. Figure 138 clearly demonstrates the quantity of 'Edomite' pottery found in Area E compared to the other areas. 'Edomite' Bowl Types A and B are best represented, but no distinctive clustering becomes apparent from this plan. The distribution of non-'Edomite' pottery forms shows that a great many jars were found in Locus 175. Other than that, non-'Edomite' jugs, jars, bowls, and cooking pots in this area seem to be distributed without any significant clustering. However, somewhat higher numbers of non-'Edomite' bowl forms do seem to occur in the loci that also produced 'Edomite' bowl forms A and B in particular. Since all the locus numbers discussed in the final report are not marked on the plan however, this patterning may not necessarily be significant.

Figures 140, 141, and 142 show the distribution of small finds in areas A, B, C, and E at Tel 'Ira. Unfortunately, not all the loci, in which the small finds listed in the catalogue in the Tel 'Ira report were found, are marked on the area maps. This means that the patterning of small finds that could

be marked on these distribution maps is extremely selective. Any further discussion of the contextual distribution of small finds would therefore not be meaningful. In addition, Figures 140, 141, and 142 do not show any distinctive clustering of small finds in Areas A, B, C, and E.

In summary, the distribution maps of Areas A, B, C, and E at Tel 'Ira do not display any distinctive patterning of either pottery or small finds. This may in part be due to the fact that not all the loci, in which the small finds and pottery listed in the catalogue in the Tel 'Ira report were found, are marked on the area maps. Therefore a complete picture of the distribution of particular vessel forms and small finds was not possible to achieve. The possible relationship between 'Edomite' pottery and a higher quantity of non-'Edomite' bowl forms was suggested by the plan of Area E. However, since not all the non-'Edomite' pottery could be marked on the plan and a description of many of the loci in question is lacking in the final report, this observation cannot be taken as necessarily meaningful.

Figures 143 and 144 show the distribution of small finds and 'Edomite' and non-'Edomite' pottery at Horvat 'Uza. Since not all the loci for the small finds included in the catalogue were marked on the site plan, it was not possible to plot the vast majority of finds. The same applied to the loci of the pottery. Any meaningful discussion of the distribution of the small finds and vessels that could be plotted was therefore not possible.

Lastly, Figures 132 and 133 show the distribution of small finds, 'Edomite', and non-'Edomite' pottery at Tel Malhata. Figure 132 shows clearly that the largest quantity of 'Edomite' pottery was excavated in areas A, F, and H. This figure also clearly shows that these were the areas where the most non-'Edomite' pottery was excavated. The high proportion of 'Edomite' pottery in these areas is therefore not necessarily significant, but rather the result of larger sample sizes. A closer look at Areas A, F, and H reveals that although all these areas show high proportions of 'Edomite' Bowl Type J, there is a distinctive cluster of 'Edomite' Bowl Type K in Area A. These bowls are not found in any of the other areas at Malhata. However, the numbers of non-'Edomite' pottery forms found in Area A show that almost twice as much pottery was excavated from this area than from Areas F and H. Any patterning may therefore again simply be a result of a larger sample size. Potentially interesting is the fact that although roughly the same quantity of vessels was excavated from Areas F and H (83 and 85 respectively), more than twice as many non-'Edomite' bowl forms were excavated in Area F than in Area H, in addition to well over twice as many 'Edomite' vessel forms being found in this area. Area H in contrast, while producing less 'Edomite' pottery, revealed twice as many non-'Edomite' jar and jug forms than Area F. However, since Area A produced

equally large numbers of non-'Edomite' jar, jug, and bowl forms, as well as a very large number of 'Edomite' vessels, this pattern may not be significant.

Figure 133 shows the distribution of small finds at Tel Malhata. Fairly even quantities of all small find categories are found in all the areas that produced large numbers of small finds. No distinctive patterning of small finds is thus revealed by this distribution map.

To summarise, in a very limited way Figures 132 and 133 show the overall distribution of vessel forms and small finds in the excavated areas at Tel Malhata. No significant patterning was revealed, and even if it had, it must be emphasised that due to the lack of plans and information regarding the nature of each recorded locus, such observations could only ever remain extremely tentative. However, the potential relationship between 'Edomite' pottery and a higher quantity of non-'Edomite' bowl forms was again noted. This is interesting in the light of the findings from the distribution of vessel forms at both Qitmit and 'Ira, where a similar pattern was suggested. Again, these observations cannot be taken as necessarily meaningful due to the problems with the data noted above.

8.9.3.1 Summary

The distribution plans of the three sites in southern Israel for which sufficient data was available only really produced results for Horvat Qitmit. This was mainly because it was only for this site that a sufficient level of detail was available regarding contexts, their nature, location and content. At Horvat Qitmit very distinctive patterns of material culture use were revealed, with particular areas of the site being used for potentially very different activities involving use and/or deposition of objects. A possible relationship was noted at all three sites however, between a higher quantity of non-'Edomite' bowl forms in loci with 'Edomite' pottery. This is probably not significant, since only a selection of the pottery could be plotted onto the distribution maps, thereby potentially biasing the data. This was confirmed by the application of the chi-squared test to all the loci from all three sites independently, which showed that this relationship was not statistically significant.

The real potential of using distribution maps to try and recover patterns of artefact use and deposition within a site has been demonstrated by this section (especially by the results for Horvat Qitmit). It has also been shown that it is only possible to undertake such analysis when a suitable data set is available, which was sadly not the case for both Tel Malhata and Tel 'Ira, where a lack of basic information rendered such attempts impossible. For both of these sites, information on the locus of both pottery and small finds was available. However, due to the selectivity in the

publication of plans, data, information, and loci, it was impossible to reconstruct what was found where, and with what. As demonstrated, this means that a meaningful discussion of these objects and the reconstruction of past activities at these sites is not possible.

8.9.4 Intra-Site Distribution of Pottery and Small Finds at Sites in Jordan

Distribution maps of pottery and small finds were produced for Buseirah and Umm el-Biyara. Distribution maps of the pottery excavated at Ghrareh, Khirbet Ishra, and Khirbet al-Megheitah were also produced. The distribution maps at Buseirah have been done by area and phase only, since none of the phases in individual areas (or even within areas; see Area B below) can be linked up due to a lack of data (Bienkowski pers. comm.). In addition, Area A could not be phased for similar reasons (Bienkowski pers. comm.). This means that a meaningful discussion of the distribution of pottery and small finds across the site at any one time is impossible. Changes in the pottery through the phases in each area can be discussed however.

Figures 145 to 148 reveal the changes in pottery repertoires through the phases in Buseirah Area B squares 1 to 4. Phase 3 of Area B1-4 reveals small and roughly equal numbers of bowls, jugs, and jars, apart from cooking pots. Phase 5 of Area B1-4 produced more bowls in both quantity and variety, in addition to a larger number of jugs. Phase 7 however only revealed a few bowls both in quantity and type. Phase 8 shows an increase in bowls and jugs again, in addition to jars.

Figures 149 to 151 show the changes in pottery excavated through the phases in Buseirah Area B squares 5-8. Phase 3 produced 1 bowl. Phase 4 revealed one jug, and Phase 6 produced 6 bowls. The bowl forms included only very common forms, Bowl Type A, B, C, and D.

Figures 152 to 155 demonstrate the changes in pottery through phases 2, 4, 6, and 7 in Area C. Phase 2 displays a wide range of bowls in varying numbers, jars and jugs in roughly equal numbers and types, and no cooking pots. Phase 4 sees an increase in the number and variety of bowls, jars, and cooking pots, but still relatively few jugs. Phase 6 shows a decrease in the number and types of bowls, a smaller number of jars, and still very few jugs. Phase 7 sees an ever sharper decrease in vessel numbers and variety with just one bowl and 3 cooking pots.

Changes in the pottery of Area D cannot really be discussed meaningfully since so few vessels were recorded for this area. Indeed, Figures 156 to 164 show that only in Phase 4 is there an increase in the variety and number of bowls as well as jars. Apart from this, very little can be said about changes in the data.

Figures 165 to 172 represent the small finds distributions of Areas B, C, and D at Buseirah. Firstly, Figures 165 to 177 show that the number and variety of small finds in Area B squares 1 to 4 varies very little between phases 5 and 8, despite a distinct drop in the number of objects found in Phase 7. The only notable difference is the decrease in the number of anthropomorphic figurines from a substantial number in Phase 5, to none in Phase 7 and just 1 in Phase 8. Figure 168 shows the distribution of small finds in Area B squares 5 to 8 Phase 6. No small finds were recorded for any of the other phases in this area. The small find distributions of Phases 4 and 6 of Area C are given by Figures 169 and 170. These show no distinctive patterns, apart from a sharp decrease in objects from Phase 4 to 6. For Area D, Figures 171 and 172 show the distribution of small finds for Phases 7 and 10. Very few small finds were found in these phases and no real changes can be detected between them.

To summarise, due to the fact that it was not possible to assess the distribution of pottery and small finds across the site at any one time, a meaningful analysis of the relationship between particular vessel forms and types in terms of use and/or deposition was rendered impossible. In addition, the lack of information on the nature of the contexts makes any discussion of changes through time or differences across the site very difficult.

Turning now to Umm el-Biyara, Figures 173 to 175 show the distribution of pottery and small finds at this site. The distribution of vessel forms in Figure 173 reveals no immediate patterning of particular vessel types apart from Locus AXLI which produced the largest quantity of pottery as well as the greatest variety in vessel types. Figure 174 also shows that bowls, jars, jugs, and cooking pots are fairly evenly distributed across the site and that they do not cluster in any particular area. Figure 175 however, does reveal some patterning concerning the distribution of small finds at Umm el-Biyara. Tools and implements for example seem to cluster in Locus ALI1, weaponry in Locus AXLIX, shells in Locus XXXIII, and objects related to weaving in Loci XLI and XLII. Coarse stone is scattered fairly evenly across the site. Although objects in the decorative elements/'art' category seem to cluster in Loci XLI and XLII, because they are all carved ivory or bone inlay fragments, this is not really significant since they could all have come from one object.

In summary, the distribution plans of the pottery at Umm el-Biyara revealed no particular clustering of vessel types across the site. The small finds distribution map however showed distinct concentrations of objects in particular areas revealing potentially differing use and/or deposition of material in those areas. Due to a lack of information regarding the nature of the contexts marked on the map, and the fact that not all the contexts in which pottery and small finds were found were

marked on the plan in the preliminary reports of Umm el-Biyara, no further conclusions can be reached.

Figure 176 reveals that at Ghrareh Cooking Pots Type A cluster in room 2. Bowl Types D, J, F, G and Jar Type A also cluster in this room, as well as in room 9 (bowls D, J and F), room 12 (Jars A), and room 19 (bowls G). The overwhelming majority of bowls in terms of both type and number were thus found in rooms 2 and 9. Room 2 however, produced a large number of cooking pots A which room 9 did not. No information on the contexts of the small finds excavated at Ghrareh was available. It was therefore not possible to produce a distribution map of small finds. The pottery distribution map however shows distinct concentrations of certain vessel forms in particular areas revealing potentially differing use and/or deposition of material in those areas.

Figures 177 and 178 show that no distinctive clustering is detectable at either Megheitah or Ishra. This is mainly due to the small amount of pottery that was excavated at both of these sites and due to the limited areas of excavation (especially at Megheitah).

8.9.5 Summary

The discussion of distribution maps and the contextual analysis of small finds and non-'Edomite' pottery has demonstrated the potential of such analyses for south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. It is clear that a great deal of vital information can be gleaned from such analyses. However, due to the fact that most sites are not excavated, recorded, and published in such a way that contextual information can be retrieved at a sufficient level of detail, it is at present not possible to use any of the excavated data from late Iron Age sites in southern Israel or Jordan for such analyses. Due to these problems, it was therefore not possible to reach any definite conclusions concerning the particulars of depositional practices, use of space, or associations in the use of specific artefacts at the sites where contextual analysis was attempted.

The main exception to this is Horvat Qitmit, where contextual analysis was possible. This was principally because this site has been published in more detail than most other sites, mainly due to its small size. However, the lack of quantification of excavated data and the use of the locus to stratum method still pose problems in the use of material from Horvat Qitmit. Nevertheless, the analysis of the pottery and small finds distributions at this site demonstrate that crucial information can be gathered concerning how that site was used by people in the past. Such information is vital if scholars wish to address a wide range of questions concerning the daily lives of people in the late Iron Age southern Levant. Some of these questions will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

8.10 Conclusion

To conclude, the analyses conducted in this study have shown that there are a number of instances where there are similarities between the 'Edomite' pottery in southern Israel and Jordan. In some cases this can be seen in the common occurrence of types in both areas as well as relative numbers or proportions of the different types. However, there are also differences between the numbers and usage of the ceramic assemblages in Jordan as compared to Israel. The most important difference is that in Israel it is predominantly two vessel categories that occur, bowls and cooking pots. This pattern was shown to be statistically highly significant. In addition, differences in vessel usage were noted. 'Edomite' assemblages seem to have been mainly focused on serving, while the non-'Edomite' assemblages in southern Israel focus mainly on storage. Again, this was shown to be a statistically highly significant pattern.

The pottery types analysed here have been closely connected to theories about the 'Edomites' in the late Iron Age. If that was the most appropriate way to understand these vessel forms it might be expected that they would have been used in social practices in similar ways both in southern Israel and Jordan. However, it has been shown that there are significant differences between these two regions, even when examining a relatively restricted data set. In addition, significant variation in the use of vessel forms within these regions was demonstrated. Indeed, when comparing assemblages within Israel and those within Jordan, significant differences at a local level were revealed. The analysis presented in this chapter has thus demonstrated that the archaeology of the late Iron Age southern Levant is an archaeology of the local, with inter-site differences much greater than traditional approaches have indicated. Furthermore, it has shown that the traditional broad, regional units of analysis - or archaeological 'cultures' - are very hard to define. These conclusions therefore confirm the view expressed in chapters 6 that traditional interpretations of the late Iron Age southern Levant owe much more to culture-historical methodology than reality. This is because this method has assumed the existence of homogenous, monolithic culture blocks that correlate with equally monolithic ethnic groups, which has perpetuated the use of approaches that mask variability that would be visible under different taxonomic conditions. These traditional methods have thus suppressed the local and contextual usage of material culture that has been so clearly revealed by the analyses in this chapter. This chapter has therefore not only shown that local traditions of existence were present in the late Iron Age southern Levant, but that, depending on the questions asked of archaeological remains and the methods used to interpret them, it is possible to produce different understandings of the past. Some of these alternative understandings will be discussed in the next, and concluding, chapter.

CHAPTER NINE

Diversity and Complexity in the Southern Levant

9.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, a range of problems was outlined concerning the idea that the distribution of 'Edomite' pottery in the late Iron Age southern Levant was, to a large extent, determined by the presence of ethnic groups. Indeed, a re-analysis of the distribution and composition of the 'Edomite' pottery assemblages in the southern Levant suggests that there is relatively little to support the notion of ethnicity and population movement as the interpretative framework for this type of pottery. In particular, a review of the 'Edomite' pottery assemblages found in southern Israel suggests that these represent a selective adoption of certain ceramic forms from the late Iron Age ceramic repertoire of southern Jordan. Furthermore, this review suggests the existence of significant variation between these assemblages. In addition, the analysis of the distribution of standard late Iron Age pottery forms in southern Jordan and Israel suggests the existence of significant diversity within late Iron Age material culture in these two areas. Indeed, late Iron Age ceramic assemblages at sites in southern Jordan and Israel vary considerably from site to site. The ceramic evidence thus points to a highly diverse situation, not readily susceptible to one overarching explanation. The standard culture-historical interpretation of the material culture patterning in this area has thus been clearly undermined by the data analysis presented in this study.

Because much of the foregoing has been focused on the deconstruction of existing explanations, the aim of this chapter is to balance this critique by drawing together some of the themes discussed in previous chapters to suggest alternative ways of understanding the archaeology of the period in question without relying on problematic assumptions. Yet it must be emphasised that the aim of the present work as a whole is only to investigate the 'Edomite' discourse; some alternative hypotheses will be presented, but there will be no attempt to produce any definite conclusions concerning what was 'really' happening in the late Iron Age. The data presently available cannot provide evidence on which to build an alternative view of the past. As argued in Chapter 7, that would require a detailed contextual analysis of the dynamics of individual sites and their local environs *before* any general comments could be made. Instead, the aim of this chapter is to demonstrate the potential of new approaches and ideas, and to thereby point the way for future research on the late Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant.

9.2 Complexity and Diversity in Late Iron Age Material Culture Patterning

As was shown in Chapter 8, the superficial unity of the 'Edomite' pottery phenomenon, as well as the focus on ethnic groups such as 'Judahites' and 'Edomites', has resulted in distracting scholarly attention from the existence of significant diversity and complex patterning within the late Iron Age material culture of the southern Levant. Traditional interpretations of 'Edomite' pottery thus appear to owe less to close consideration of the data than to the tenacity of a disciplinary tradition that has continued to employ rather simplistic concepts regarding ethnicity and the meaning of material culture.

Indeed, even at the physical scale of site-specific research, most Iron Age archaeologists still work to identify the typical and the average. In doing so, they have tended to see the atypical as indicating the presence of 'other' groups from somewhere else. Following traditional culture-history, the general goal of research has been - and still is - to identify, describe, and then compare temporal trends by determining regional norms 'built up' from site-specific findings. With time the goal was to develop even larger-scale spatio-temporal models of entire culture complexes, such as the 'Edomite' and 'Judahite' cultures for example. This culture-historical emphasis on building up regional-scale spatio-temporal frameworks from site-specific findings has in no way been unique to archaeologists studying the south Levantine Iron Age. Indeed, the goal of identifying, describing, and tracking both regional and extra-regional culture complexes through typological studies also characterises the explicit goal of most early and mid-twentieth century archaeologists in Europe and America (see Chapter 6). As has been argued for other archaeological cases therefore, it is precisely because of the normative interest in time-space systematics through an almost exclusive focus on artefact typology that intra-regional variability has not been considered an important research question (e.g. Clark 1991: 84-85; Kuhn 1991: 248-249). As such, a particular way of thinking (normativism) structured a particular way of seeing (regional and extra-regional empirical variability in morphological attributes), and together these processes structured on-the-ground analytical methodologies (typology and time-space systematics) (Dobres 1999b: 12).

In the 1960s, European and American archaeology moved away from normative thought to processual theory. As was shown in Chapters 5 and 6 however, this shift in academic thought never really occurred in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. As a result, the view of material culture patterning in the Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant has remained fixed on the analytical scale of 'the region', and still employs site-specific findings to further other research interests. Iron Age researchers thus still put site-specific patterns of artefact variability to use in describing

regional (ethnic) lifeways. 'The region' therefore still forms the physical and phenomenological scale at which site-specific variability is explained (or described). Broadly speaking, site-specific finds are thus necessary to place sites within their ethnic territories, as well as to place them in their chronological order. Site-specific variability is thus seen as a means to an end rather than as meaningful in its own right.

From this perspective, site-specific data seem to be relevant only as they help elucidate regional trends of one sort or another. However, this neglects the dynamic nature of social engagement in and through which, for example, social and economic behaviour was learnt, taught, expressed materially, and thus made part of everyday life. How such dynamics played out among people engaged in social and material activities that varied from site to site and the role these agential dynamics played in creating the material variability on which we place so much importance, are never considered causal factors of archaeological relevance (ibid.: 16). Indeed, the application of macro-scale explanatory models of artefact patterning has never made it necessary, or behaviourally meaningful, to think about material variability in terms of interpersonal social dynamics nor to see interacting social agents as the explanatory culprits (Brumfiel 1991; Cowgill 1993; Dobres and Hoffmann 1994; Dobres 1999b). Contemporary interpretations of late Iron Age material life thus provide little room for an explicit consideration of the *people* who variously farmed, hunted, and produced, or the *people* who variously organised their activities from site to site (Dobres 1999b: 15).

To understand the late Iron Age at the phenomenological scale at which life was meaningful to the people involved, explicit theoretical and analytical attention should be paid to variability in material repertoires at site-scale. This variability has to be explicitly considered in terms of what it implies about the dynamics of interpersonal social and material action in which these people engaged (ibid.; Dobres 1995; Dobres and Hoffman 1994). According to traditional normative interpretations, only regional-scale material culture variability is relevant, and variations from site to site are little more than deviations, or 'noise' of no particular import (see Chapter 6). However, the review of late Iron Age ceramic data in Chapter 8 has demonstrated the great extent to which these assemblages vary, and the extent to which the normative approach suppresses this scale of artefact variability, in other words the suppression of intra-regional variability in favour of regional patterning. In addition to this, it is argued here that because the site is the scale at which agents in the past meaningfully and materially interacted with each other while 'taking care of business' (Dobres 1999b: 15), site-specific material variability is archaeologically highly significant.

With this in mind, the methodology used in this study was formed. The analytical scale was focused on individual sites (as opposed to 'the region') and composite assemblages were studied as opposed to typology. As such, the types of pottery used and the function of those vessels was compared, not in order to 'build up' to a regional understanding of differences between southern Jordan and Israel, but to see how activities varied from locale to locale and to use these data to begin to pinpoint the specific activities undertaken at each site. By taking the site as a meaningful scale of study (and as meaningfully experienced by the people living on it), it has been demonstrated that even when the same basic activities were undertaken (e.g. cooking, storage, eating, preparing food) and the same basic equipment was used (e.g. cooking pots and storage jars), the ceramic types that were used varied from site to site. Choice in cooking pot types, bowl forms, and jar types, varied between sites where the same functional activities were pursued. While there are also significant similarities between the assemblages analysed in this study (see Chapter 8 and section 9.4.3 below), the scale at which this study has been conducted has clearly demonstrated that choice in the use of equipment was clearly not structured by blind submission to normative rules, functional need, or typology.

The juxtaposition of site-specific variability to regional patterns has enabled the identification of hitherto unrecorded patterns of artefact variability that challenge the conventional view of the normative and rule-bound structure of the late Iron Age in the southern Levant. Rather than practising the same late Iron Age way of life from site to site, differentiated only by ethnicity, the data analysis presented in this study suggests that these people participated differentially in culture. It is not sufficient to class these findings as the idiosyncratic vagaries of individuals however. Rather, it is important to recognise these patterns of variability as traces of individual agents interacting with each other through and during their everyday material activities, such as the preparation and consumption of food. It is therefore important to consider why people made the choices they did, for it is *people* who made these choices, *people* who pursued these activities, and *people* must therefore be considered as 'explanatory culprits' (c.f. Dobres 1999b: 22).

9.3 Late Iron Age Material Culture in the Southern Levant: Agency and Structure

Highlighting the role of agency and seeing the activities of daily life as social practice has important implications for our understanding of the late Iron Age. In previous approaches to late Iron Age remains the main concern has been with their ethnic identity, cultural affiliation, and date. However, the activities involving these remains in daily life are particular types of social practice and we must examine the way they were enacted by the people concerned. The practices selected by individuals or groups of people as an appropriate way to carry out activities, will be determined by who those

people are, what they are doing, when they are doing it, and who they are doing it for. The way of 'doing things' deemed appropriate in any given socio-historical context is determined by, and also maintains, those practices and ways of seeing the world (although such practices and rules can always be challenged or subverted).

As such, it is important to view pottery as a material culture resource that could be actively employed within a range of social strategies. In other words, it could be used to structure, express, and maintain certain practices and identities. Any interpretation of late Iron Age ceramic assemblages will therefore need to consider the social context within which certain types of pottery became dominant in some communities, acceptable in some, and apparently all but irrelevant in others. In addition, the presence of more widely distributed cooking pots, storage jars, bowls, and jugs in traditional local styles alongside less common - and sometimes unique - forms at sites in the southern Levant reveals that, inasmuch as pottery is indicative of social practices, particular styles of pottery were integrated within local late Iron Age practices in a variety of ways, with sites and their inhabitants participating differently in the available material culture. This implies that we must think in terms not of a homogenous late Iron Age 'culture' but of a late Iron Age world that encompassed the coexistence of diverse communities and lifestyles, from the standpoint of which particular types of pottery could be drawn upon to greater or lesser degrees.

The implications of theories of practice and structuration for the analysis of material culture are thus the potential for it to be seen as complex, multi-dimensional and dynamic, thus undermining the idea that it directly reflects the identities of people and general processes, such as ethnic/cultural change (Barrett 1994; Lucy 1999). Indeed, as was discussed in Chapter 6, objects and places are/were given meaning through being used in social practices which they also help to create and form. Individual social agents conducted those social practices and it therefore follows that their views and understandings of both the material culture and practices are likely to be diverse. It must therefore be reiterated that any meaning ascribed to an object or place by an individual is context specific, hence it may vary over time or space, as well as from person to person. Again, the idea that the same material culture or practices represent *only* common meanings or processes must be questioned (c.f. Barrett 1994: 92).

If the meaning and use of material culture is determined by structure and agency, and is therefore context-specific, it is important to recognise that material culture is not used arbitrarily. Rather, it may be (consciously or unconsciously) appropriated into social practice (Niles 1997) by groups or individuals to mark a range of identities and affiliations in certain contexts. The idea that material culture is not used arbitrarily and that it is appropriated rather than imposed by vague external

forces is a key concept that requires further discussion. Theories of appropriation and consumption will therefore be discussed in the next section.

9.4 'Edomite' Pottery and Appropriation

9.4.1 Introduction

Thus far, the immense diversity and sheer complexity of material culture patterning in the late Iron Age southern Levant has been discussed. This has been ascribed to the idea that particular types of pottery were integrated within local Iron Age practices in a variety of ways, with sites and their inhabitants participating differently in the available material culture. It must be recognised however, that the presence of 'Edomite' pottery at sites in southern Israel - although not by any means a homogenous phenomenon - still displays remarkable similarities that require further discussion. Indeed, it has been noted that the assemblages of 'Edomite' pottery from sites in Israel - although composed of different types - consist overwhelmingly of bowls and cooking pots. This is in contrast to the full range of 'Edomite' types present in assemblages at sites in Jordan. It therefore appears that the 'Edomite' pottery present in southern Israel was to some degree adapted to fit specific local circumstances. Only specific vessel forms were *selected* for use. So although a significant degree of variation exists between the assemblages of both the 'local' and the 'Edomite' pottery, which implies that this pottery was being drawn upon variously by different communities for potentially different reasons, the dominant presence of bowls and cooking pots clearly requires further discussion.

Indeed, since this pottery was seemingly not adopted arbitrarily, any interpretation of 'Edomite' material in southern Israel will need to consider the idea that this pottery was *appropriated* for particular reasons rather than imposed by vague external causes. The origin of the *demand* for a type of pottery very different from the local material must therefore be explored, as well as the reason why that demand was concentrated within a restricted area. To do so, recent archaeological and anthropological studies concerning the consumption and appropriation of material culture require discussion.

9.4.2 Theories of Consumption and Appropriation

Culture-historical theory relies on two principal mechanisms for change; population replacement through migrations or invasions and the diffusion of material or ideas from an external source (Shennan 1989b: 330). The continued prevalence of culture-historical approaches in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology therefore make it inevitable that attention remains focused on

external catalysts for change. Conversely, people living in the Iron Age southern Levant have retained a remarkably inactive role in archaeologists' explanations for change. Either material culture change has been equated to population replacement, or, in migration and trade models, it appears that some form of passive acculturation of 'Edomite' material by the indigenous population is envisaged. No particular reason is given for this acculturation other than the assumption that with migration, invasion or trade, material culture changes.

It is however too simplistic to say that because particular pottery styles (or other forms of material culture) were known and available around the southern Levant, they would automatically have been used by those who came into contact with them through some form of passive acculturation. Indeed, post-processual studies have emphasised that material culture is 'active' and is integral to the social practices of groups/institutions and the individuals of which they are constituted. As was argued above, material can be used to structure, express, and maintain certain practices and identities (e.g. Barrett 1991: 6). Material culture is therefore not used arbitrarily. Rather, groups and individuals may consciously or unconsciously appropriate it into social practice to mark a range of identities and affiliations in certain contexts. Material culture therefore need not only be imposed from an external source, as when migration, invasion, or diffusion are seen as the primary catalysts for change, or even imposed and acculturated more widely, as with the idea of trade contacts or small-scale migration. Consumption and appropriation have therefore recently become the subject of greater interest and theoretical awareness in archaeology.

The study of consumption as a problematic field only emerged in the 1970s and 1980s in the social sciences generally. Until then consumption had been regarded as unproblematic, as merely the acquisition of goods on the basis of their utility value (Buchli and Lucas 2001a: 21-22). In terms of mainstream studies during this time, two different strands of thought are identifiable which questioned this view. One, based on the ideas of Bataille (1991), focused on consumption as a symbolic and semiotic rather than strictly utilitarian activity. The works of Baudrillard and Barthes exemplify this strand (Barthes 1973; 1977; Baudrillard 1981; 1996). The other fell more within an empirical and sociological framework and studied the way consumption is not merely a passive but a creative activity which different groups within society use as a means of self-expression. Works by Hebdige (1993) and Bourdieu (1984) fall within this strand. Today, both these schools of thought feed into a dynamic and increasingly significant area of research which cross-cuts disciplinary boundaries (e.g. Miller 1995b; 1998).

As mentioned above, a central tenet of these strands of thought has been the critique of economics and rational choice theory. Baudrillard for example questioned both the 'natural' basis of human

needs and the 'natural' use of objects. He argued instead that needs are not given but socially and culturally created (Baudrillard 1981; 1996). This perspective questions the view of consumption as merely the acquisition of goods on the basis of their utility value – i.e. the provision of basic human needs, and the consumer as the 'rational being', making 'rational' decisions on the basis of these given needs (Buchli and Lucas 2001a: 21).

One of the first anthropological studies to incorporate such ideas was that of Douglas and Isherwood (1979) who showed that people used material items to create cultural order so that things were bought and used to reflect and extend cultural categories. For them, material culture was about relaying messages. Many of their specific theories are outdated now, but their work was immensely influential at the time (Gosden 1999). More recently, and following the tradition of Douglas and Isherwood, Miller has also attempted to reform economics and re-orient anthropology (Miller 1987; 1995b). Miller is sceptical about the existence of the rational consumer. For him, consumption is instead about 'objectification', where people create a world of their desire in physical form through buying things and making use of them. In particular, he has noted how people construct their identities through the goods they consume or appropriate. In addition, Miller (1995a: 1) has written that consumption, as a means of understanding social and material culture change, has 'suffered from extraordinary academic neglect'; he argues that this concept should instead be placed at the 'vanguard of history'. Indeed, the growing importance of consumption has been seen as a key feature in the emergence of 'modern' societies (Matthews 1999: 189). However, as an archaeologist, Matthews argues that the correlation of consumption solely with modern societies is a 'mistaken deduction' (ibid.). He notes that ethno-archaeological studies of 'pre-modern'/non-westernised societies have also shown that material culture is used to construct personal identities and that people appropriate it for this purpose (ibid.). Without making direct ethnographic analogies, it may therefore be suggested that consumption may not be relevant only to modern westernised contexts but also to the study of people in the past. However, given that consumption has contemporary resonances, the more neutral term 'appropriation' is favoured here (following Niles 1997). Whichever term is used, there are a number of themes raised by these recent studies that are useful with regard to the attempts being made here to break away from simple, generalised explanations of material culture variation relying solely on external stimuli.

Indeed, Niles (1997: 204-5) has written that 'long-term impersonal processes' such as acculturation and assimilation can only ever be partial explanations for cultural production, maintenance and change as those aggregate approaches 'dehumanise' consumption (also Miller 1995a: 18). Moreover, Miller (ibid.: 2) has dismissed previous aggregate models of human behaviour as 'quite bizarre' and has stated that 'there is a spectre haunting the world today - the spectre of the flesh and

blood consumer!' (ibid.: 18). Recent studies therefore emphasise the importance of considering individual social agents and that appropriation is a personal decision. Furthermore, they emphasise that acts of appropriation are carried out by agents in specific contexts and can only be understood as such (Niles 1997: 205-6; Miller 1995a: 51).

Appropriation is thus always carried out by socially aware agents, but the reasons for any particular appropriation may be complex and context specific, involving a dialectic relationship between the individual and their socio-historical context. This context will in turn influence what is appropriated and why. Appropriation may be intentional; in some cases individuals may be able to give their reasons for acquiring items (in Giddens' term, a 'discursive act'). But it may also be an example of practical consciousness; a non-discursive act by an individual who knows how to 'go on' in everyday life and to deal with new or changing situations as they arise. It must be emphasised however that ideas, identities, and practices cannot be separated from the physical/material manifestations of appropriation. People do not only appropriate 'things' (Miller 1995a: 32). Rather, there is a dialectical relationship between the creation and maintenance of identities and practices and the material employed as part of this. Hence, people do not appropriate objects alone, they are also taking on identities and ideas that are partly negotiated through material culture.

These ideas have significant implications for understandings of material culture variation. Archaeologists may identify material culture that appears to be 'new' to certain places or specific contexts and there may indeed be situations in which it is necessary or desirable to appropriate previously unknown/unused objects (e.g. if other objects are no longer physically available). Nevertheless, the appropriation of 'new' material culture always takes place within the context of what went before, and to some degree this will transform the existing socio-historical context. Similarly, 'new' material culture may be appropriated to establish new identities, but it may also serve to maintain existing identities or practices. Hence, the significance of seemingly new material culture may not be entirely an innovation for those using it and therefore we cannot assume that 'new' material culture can be directly equated to new identities, social institutions or practices.

These observations have further implications for archaeological periodisation. In traditional approaches, the change from one period to the next is seen to be marked by significant material disjunctions. However, if there is not necessarily a direct relationship between changing material culture and practices and identities, then using artefact change as a simple indicator of wider changes must be questionable. The contexts in which material culture change occurs will be important in determining the wider relevance of this change. Through this discussion of appropriation/consumption it has been shown that further insight can be acquired into the dynamic

processes whereby people (their identities, values, institutions or practices) and material culture can be understood equally as part of societal self-construction, objectification and change (Miller 1995a: 54, 277).

How might these ideas influence our understandings of the late Iron Age southern Levant? As was shown in section 9.4.1 'Edomite' pottery was adopted selectively. Any interpretation of 'Edomite' ceramics in the Iron Age southern Levant will therefore need to consider the idea that this pottery was appropriated for particular reasons, rather than imposed by poorly defined external forces. The origin of the demand for a type of pottery very different from the local material must therefore be explored. This requires a consideration of the specific space-time context of the use of 'Edomite' pottery, since social practice and appropriation must always be understood in such a context. Both of these aspects will therefore be considered in turn in the next two sections.

The temporal context will be considered first. Why did the demand for a type of pottery very different from the local material develop at the time it did and why was that demand concentrated within a restricted area? Following that, the spatial context will be considered. Geography is one type of physical constraint upon appropriation as objects, places and practices are not always available to everyone, everywhere (and this may contribute to their perceived value/significance). Here, 'Edomite' ceramic assemblages from the late Iron Age in the southern Levant are the focus of attention and, as was shown, these are distributed in southern Israel and Jordan. However, given that the ideas of ethnicity, invasion/migration, and diffusion have been questioned, how did this pottery become distributed as it is and how did it become available for appropriation?

9.4.3 Temporal Context: 'Edomite' Pottery and Foodways

Since 'Edomite' pottery was appropriated selectively for particular reasons, the question regarding the origin of the *demand* for a type of pottery very different from the local material must be addressed, as well as the reason why that demand was concentrated within a restricted area. To reiterate, despite the overall variation in specific vessel forms that make up the 'Edomite' assemblages found in southern Israel, these assemblages nevertheless consist overwhelmingly of bowls and cooking pots. Secondly, a high proportion of the bowls are decorated (a higher proportion than in Jordan in fact). Thirdly, and not surprisingly, functional analysis of the 'Edomite' pottery assemblages reveals that the activity represented by the highest proportion of pottery was serving, followed by cooking. The functional analysis of the pottery assemblages in Jordan shows that here too the majority of the pottery falls into the serving category. In contrast, functional

analysis of the 'local' pottery in southern Israel demonstrates that the majority of pottery in these assemblages falls into the storage category.

Without wishing to generalise, it would therefore seem that despite the significant degree of variation that existed in the assemblages from southern Jordan, which implies that this pottery was being drawn upon variously by different communities for potentially different reasons, serving as an activity was clearly very important. The same might be said concerning the 'Edomite' pottery assemblages in southern Israel. It is therefore important to think of late Iron Age pots as tools for storing, preparing, cooking, and serving food and drink; in other words to consider the 'foodways' of these communities (Braun 1983). The term 'foodways' not only refers to Iron Age food preparation technology and the types of foods consumed. It also embraces the social facets of food such as the conventions of the meal, how cooking and eating reflect and reproduce the structure of family life, and the use of meals to incorporate or distinguish, express, or compete for status (Hill 1998).

Attention to the importance of foodways leads to a consideration of the potential meaning of the changes in the ceramic repertoire that were taking place at selected sites in southern Israel where the use of 'Edomite' pottery was adopted. Since the increased repertoire of late Iron Age ceramic assemblages with the introduction of 'Edomite' pottery consisted almost exclusively of new serving and cooking wares, this implies that the types, look, and way meals were served and cooked were changing at those sites.

In addition to the changes brought about to the late Iron Age ceramic repertoire in southern Israel through the adoption of 'Edomite' pottery, changes are also discernible in the repertoire of 'local' shapes. The most obvious change in late Iron Age pottery was the greater range of different shaped 'tools' available, especially regarding cooking and serving. Cooking pots in southern Israel during the ninth and early eighth centuries BC are, for example, dominated by broad, relatively shallow vessels with a carinated body and a rounded base, usually without handles (Amiran 1969: 227; Barkay 1992: 354). From the late eighth to sixth centuries BC potters in southern Israel produced a much wider range of cooking pot shapes, most of them new shapes altogether. Indeed, in late Iron Age southern Israel, instead of just one basic cooking pot shape, there were now at least five common shapes, as well as a range of specific shapes unique to particular sites (e.g. at Beersheba and Ramat Rahel; see Chapter 8). In contrast to the ninth and eighth centuries, there was also an increase in imported pottery, represented mainly by 'East Greek' pottery imports, Assyrian palace ware and its local imitations, Cypro-Phoenician ware, and of course 'Edomite' pottery (Amiran 1969: 291-301; Barkay 1992: 362). In addition to the wider range of cooking pot types, the

variation in bowl types was immense and increased through the addition of 'non-local' shapes (Barkay 1992: 364). All of these changes imply that a greater range of ceramic tool types were now being used, which points to important changes in how a meal would be cooked, served, and looked 'at table', in the manner and types of foods eaten, and in the basic categorisation of this (and other?) spheres of material culture. In other words, seen from the perspective of the use of pottery and foodways these differences were not that there were 'just' different forms of pots being used. The differences between these communities were differences in kind, indicating significantly different foodways.

This perspective ties pottery closely to the social discourses through which particular social forms were reproduced. This is because the daily meal, its preparation and consumption can be seen as one of the key areas in which the structure of the family (its form, division of labour, gender relations, expectations, forms of authority, etc.) are made manifest and reproduced. Preparing and eating daily meals are, as such, one of the ways in which a society's norms are expressed, inculcated, and reproduced. These norms include an acknowledgement of the different forms of authority and obligation through which people lead their lives (Beaudry *et al.* 1991; Douglas 1975; Murcott 1983). These ideas have important implications for the study of the tools used in preparing and serving meals (Deetz 1977; Yentsch 1991). The transformation of the pottery repertoires in the course of the late Iron Age would have affected all meals, not just special occasions. As such, they provide evidence that shifts in family structure, social norms, and the sources of social authority were probably taking place, even if the details of such changes will probably remain obscure to us.

John Barrett's (1991) discussion of the social basis of pottery classification is pertinent here. The changes from ninth and eighth century ceramics to late eighth to sixth century ceramics can be seen as the production of a wider range of categories of vessel in use. Categories are a product of people's thinking on and practical engagement with their worlds. Pottery and other artefact categories can be seen as physical resources drawn on by people in the daily negotiation of their relations with others. As such the very existence of different categories of artefacts helps to structure the particular systems of social authority and power in that society. The changing of pottery categories seen in this period, the addition of new categories, the redefinition of others, and by inference, the social practices that drew on those categories, were an essential part of attempts to structure, express, renegotiate, or maintain certain practices and identities (Barrett 1991: 6).

By stressing the importance of the roles that (specific types of) pots played in the foodways of groups, it has become clear that 'a pot is not just a pot' (Hill 1998: 10). Indeed, the discussions above have shown that particular forms of objects, and how they were made and used, are related to

a complex web of religious, social, and political factors. A particular type of object may not be simply replaced by an apparently similar object with the same function. As such, 'Edomite' pottery may have been well known to (some) people in southern Israel, but it was not uniformly adopted because it did not fit within the categories of vessels, and the webs of social practice and authority that pottery was made and used within in all communities. It could therefore be argued that it was only when a shift in emphasis to the preparation and consumption of food had taken place in some communities, that new forms of pottery were exploited at particular sites in southern Israel. However, it was how the use of particular types of pots, made in particular ways, and by particular people was socially embedded that meant that communities chose not to adopt pottery forms from groups they potentially had contact with for hundreds of years. It was when such conditions were changing or being challenged that new uses for new types of pots, made in new ways, were possible.

It therefore becomes crucial to consider the potential development of new eating and drinking practices at particular sites in southern Israel during the late Iron Age. The greater distinction between methods of cooking and the new emphasis on serving - in other words the new style(s) of eating - suggested by the new forms of pottery in use, represent a distinct shift in both the categorisation of material culture and the social practices such categories sustained. Given that the serving of food was clearly also an important part of daily life at sites in southern Jordan - as attested by the wide variety and immense quantity of bowl forms - it might be suggested that what we are seeing is a dominant discourse concerning the serving and consumption of meals as a forum for the renegotiation, structuring, and maintenance of the social forms of these diverse communities. Given that 'Edomite' pottery was not adopted uniformly and not at all sites within close distance of each other indicates that this dominant 'way of doing' was drawn upon variously by different groups of people. Shifts in the preparation and serving of food clearly became a common forum for the reproduction and re-negotiation of social forms, a dominant 'way of doing' that could be adopted and interpreted in a variety of ways and thus adapted to fit specific local circumstances. This is not, therefore, to argue for a universal meaning. Given the polysemous nature of material culture and the issues discussed above, we should think in terms of the appropriation and recontextualisation of 'Edomite' pottery within a variety of local situations in the southern Levant (see e.g. Jones 1997a: 118; Barrett 1994).

9.4.4 Geographical Context: The Wadi 'Arabah

In section 9.4.2 the importance of the spatial context of material culture appropriation was emphasised. Indeed, it is important to consider where material or ideas can be appropriated from.

They must be *available* if they are to be appropriated. In this case, since most of the 'Edomite' pottery that has been excavated in southern Israel was locally made (Gunneweg and Mommsen 1990; Beit-Arieh 1995a; 1999; Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001; see also Chapter 3) we are discussing the appropriation of an *idea*, or a 'way of doing'. In other words, the appropriation of a particular style of pottery to be locally produced for use in foodways. However, like material, ideas must be available if they are to be appropriated.

Geography is one form of physical constraint upon appropriation, as objects, ideas, places and practices are not always available to everyone in all places. Therefore, it is necessary to consider the spatial setting for this study, and in particular the main geographical feature that lies between southern Jordan and Israel, the Wadi Arabah. The Wadi Arabah - which runs between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba - marks the modern political border between Israel and Jordan. It is also traditionally interpreted as the border between the kingdoms of Edom and Judah in the first millennium BC (Bartlett 1989; Herr 1997; Beit-Arieh 1995a). Together with its supposed barrenness, the idea of the Wadi Arabah as a boundary has tended to condition modern interpretation of it as a barrier (Bienkowski 1999). This conception of the Wadi Arabah has been reinforced by the fact that fieldwork has been constrained by the modern border which has resulted in projects being carried out completely independently on the east and west sides of the wadi. Hence, no overall map of sites, and therefore no overall understanding of the area has been achieved (ibid.). Moreover, since it has been regarded as a barrier, the wadi has been perceived as a hinterland of sites in the east and west (e.g. Levy 1987; 1995b), and its role as an intensively used area and route - not only north-south but especially east-west - has been poorly understood (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001).

The Wadi Arabah has a number of springs and dense vegetation in places however, both of which have allowed it to be used as a route and for settlement in the recent past. Indeed, recent research shows that in most periods southern Jordan and Israel were part of the same socio-economic system, implying that the Wadi Arabah was an integral part of that. Particular trade routes are known, and ethnographic sources indicate that bedouin groups from southern Jordan and Israel not only seasonally inhabited the Arabah, but regularly crossed it to reach southern Israel and beyond and vice versa (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001: 29-36). Due to it being the shortest distance at which to cross the Arabah and the presence of springs, the area between the sites of En Haseva and Buseirah was for example a well-known route between Israel and Jordan that was used by various groups in the recent past (Cohen 1994: 203). In addition, recent surveys and excavations at Timna and Wadi Faynan have shown that the Arabah intermittently formed one of the largest copper production centres in the southern Levant from the Chalcolithic to the Classical periods, again

highlighting the regional importance of this area (e.g. Rothenberg 1972; 1988; 1990; Hauptmann *et al.* 1989; Hauptmann *et al.* 1992; Hauptmann 1996). Surveys and excavations have also begun to show the extent of settlement in this region during the Iron Age (Hart and Knauf 1986; MacDonald 1990; Fritz 1996; Barker *et al.* 1997; 1998; 1999; Levy *et al.* 1999)

These results force us to re-conceptualise the geography of the southern Levant. The intensive use of the Arabah as a route, for seasonal settlement, and for mining, alters our perceptions of this area. In this light, the Wadi Arabah becomes a thoroughfare and an area of settlement rather than an obstacle to creep around; a zone of interaction. Indeed, if borders, modern and ancient alike, are forgotten for a moment and we focus upon socio-economic interaction, the areas now called southern Israel and southern Jordan can be seen as part of one large area, dynamically linked through various forms of interaction.

In contrast, south Levantine archaeological scholarship has traditionally perceived the Wadi Arabah as a divide that must be crossed rather than as a unifying geographical feature. Indeed, since south Levantine Iron Age archaeology was seen as the reflection of biblical history, the material evidence was interpreted - following Alt and Noth's historical focus on the nation state (see Chapter 2) - as representing powerful states led by great men. Translated into archaeological practice, this meant that the implicit assumption of scholars in the southern Levant was that they were excavating nation states with fixed borders and national characteristics. Research questions and interpretative strategies thus revolved around the location of political boundaries and the identification of national traits. The Wadi Arabah was taken as the political boundary between Edom and Judah and material culture was rigidly split into two groups and interpreted as characteristic of the 'Edomite' and 'Judahite' nations, thereby creating the idea of an 'Edomite homeland' and peoples moving across borders and 'spreading' their material culture to other areas. Through time, this idea of the Wadi Arabah as a boundary was reinforced by the modern political situation. However, since modern political borders did not exist in the Iron Age and conceptions of ancient, rigid national borders based on the biblical narratives have been shown to be questionable (see Chapter 6), there is reason to believe that the Wadi Arabah formed as much of a zone of interaction during the Iron Age as it did in the recent past.

Indeed, once the immense diversity in material culture at the late Iron Age sites in these two regions is recognised, it becomes clear that it is perhaps too simplistic to simply split this area into two distinct 'national' entities separated by a rigid border for archaeological purposes. Especially with a view to the Wadi Arabah as a channel of communication rather than a rigid division we should perhaps instead regard these areas as one large region where diverse communities lived side by side.

They may have been part of various overarching entities (as hinted at by the Nabonidus and Mesha stelae [Dalley and Goguel 1997; Zayadine 1999; Routledge 2000; see also Chapter 3]), but since there is not necessarily a direct relationship between material culture and ethnic and political institutions, using artefact variation as a simple indicator of wider political situations is questionable. Rather what we should envisage is a dynamically linked region populated by diverse communities all living within their own specific material and social conditions, perhaps under overarching entities of some form, but not ones that necessarily directly influenced the social practices at each site. The availability and use of material culture would therefore not necessarily have been governed by strict adherence to 'national characteristics' or the presence of 'national borders'. Rather, contact between these groups of people via the Wadi Arabah would have allowed contact with other lifeways, thus making ideas, objects, and practices available for appropriation.

9.4.5 Summary and Discussion

Approaching late Iron Age material evidence in the southern Levant from a site-specific and people-centred perspective has highlighted the role of agency and the social practices that shape the activities of daily life as causal factors in material culture variability. Rather than viewing material culture differentiation and change as the result of poorly defined external causes, it has therefore been argued that material culture is appropriated for specific reasons. Concerning pottery, it is thus important to consider foodways and the way in which ceramics are closely tied to the social discourses that reproduce particular social forms through their use in the activities of everyday life.

In addressing these issues it must be stated that no definitive answers can be offered using the data currently available for the late Iron Age southern Levant. Some alternative hypotheses have been presented, but before any conclusions can be offered, future studies need to examine evidence in local contexts, so that we can investigate more closely the specific local circumstances and social practices involved in foodways which might have precipitated the appropriation of diverse pottery forms at different sites.

Detailed contextual archaeological data is thus necessary to obtain vital information regarding the deposition of pottery and food remains, to discover potentially different attitudes to particular foods and/or the vessels it was served from and prepared in. In other words, it is necessary to consider the spatial distribution of ceramics and food remains, to see where on site particular types of food and drink were being consumed and prepared, if there was any differentiation regarding the vessels from which it was being consumed or prepared, or indeed whether there was any variation at all. It is also important to consider the fact that differential deposition of household waste can indicate a

great deal about a society's attitude to food, its consumption, and preparation (e.g. Moore 1986; Rathje 1979; 2001). In addition, information concerning the types of food and drink that were being consumed is important, the cuts of meat, the types of animals and fish, the types of plants, and the types of dishes that were being consumed. Residue and lipid analysis are of vital importance in this respect. Another essential element of information is the difference in the composition of overall assemblages from various parts of a site, since this would reveal information regarding which vessels were used together, in particular spaces, potentially for particular functions. The potential differences in social practices between sites could thus be compared.

The ideas and approaches espoused above require data that is relevant to the types of questions being asked. Without sufficient data we cannot begin to approach such issues. However, as was shown in Chapters 5 and 7, most of the data that is produced by projects today is impractible for current research interests. Sites are often not dug according to stratigraphical context, many finds are not recorded and kept, only the very basic analyses are carried out on the excavated finds, and due to the recording and publication methods utilised it is very difficult to work back from the results as presented by the excavators to the actual make-up of the archaeological site. Without drastic changes to the way in which Iron Age archaeology is practised in the southern Levant today, the application of new ideas and approaches will thus remain impossible.

Encouragingly, a number of scholars have begun to address some of the problems with the archaeological interpretation of the Iron Age southern Levant (see Chapters 2 and 3, and section 9.5.1 below). In particular, they have emphasised the problems with the simplistic use of historical sources and the difficulties regarding the chronological framework resulting from that (e.g. Finkelstein 1996; Wightman 1990). However, despite the fact that a move away from problematic traditional methods is advocated and reanalysis and reinterpretation of data is endorsed, no attempt has been made to address the way in which this should happen. As a result, these scholars have tended to fall back on the same methods they attempt to criticise, and the real root of the problem remains un-addressed. Since one of the main aims of this chapter is to highlight the possibilities for future research by emphasising the value of new ideas and approaches, it is important to discuss the changing perspectives in these recent works. This will clarify the current state of south Levantine Iron Age scholarship and will help to outline the vital issues that need to be tackled if the discipline is to be brought into line with current theoretical thinking. This is crucial since a number of recent works that have challenged traditional interpretations have been hailed as revolutionary and groundbreaking. If the discipline is to move beyond its traditional questionable assumptions however, it is important to evaluate whether these publications do in fact represent a break with traditional methods.

9.5 Changing Perspectives

9.5.1 Theory and Interpretation

Following the wave of publications in recent years that have challenged the traditional biblical histories of Israel (see Chapter 4), a small number of archaeological critiques have been produced concerning the archaeological framework of the Iron Age. Two important articles that attempted to do so in part have already been discussed in Chapters 2 and 5. Wightman's (1990) and Finkelstein's (1996) articles clearly underlined the problematic nature of 'Solomonic' archaeology (Wightman) and Iron Age chronology in southern Israel (Finkelstein). In addition, Glock's articles on biblical archaeology (1985) and cultural bias in the archaeology of Palestine (1995), Finkelstein's articles on 'bible archaeology' (1998) and state formation in Israel and Judah (1999), and lastly Bienkowski's articles on 'Edomite' ethnicity (Bienkowski and Sedman 2001), Iron Age Jordan (2001a; forthcoming), and ceramic complexity in the southern Levant (Bienkowski and van der Steen 2001), have also challenged traditional notions of the Levantine Iron Age. These articles form the only *archaeological* studies to critically examine in an explicit way the current framework of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. However, although for example Wightman and Finkelstein to some extent undermine the prevailing framework for Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant, they both fall back on the same archaeological-historical parallelist methods used by all their predecessors to come up with a scenario no less biased and uncertain than those they criticise. Their attempts therefore seem unable to move beyond traditional interpretative methods, resulting in a fruitless quest for the 'correct' chronology (see Chapters 2 and 5). Thus far, these articles form the only attempts to reassess the archaeological framework of the Iron Age southern Levant.

Recently however, the newly published *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts* (Finkelstein and Silberman 2001) has attempted for the first time to critically reassess the archaeology of the entire south Levantine Iron Age. The authors argue that 'a reassessment of finds from earlier excavations and the continuing discoveries by new digs have made it clear that scholars must now approach the problems of biblical origins and ancient Israelite society from a completely new perspective' (Finkelstein and Silberman 2001: v). In their book, they set out to 'present evidence to bolster that contention and to reconstruct a very different history of ancient Israel' (ibid.). Indeed, they aim 'to tell the story of ancient Israel and the birth of its sacred scriptures from a new, *archaeological* perspective' (ibid.: 3, emphasis mine). Their goal is 'to attempt to separate history from legend' and 'through the evidence of recent discoveries [to] construct a new history of ancient Israel in which some of the most famous events and personalities mentioned in the Bible play unexpectedly different roles' (ibid.).

As a result of the more critical stance that many biblical scholars have taken towards the possibilities of writing a history of ancient Israel, this topic has become hotly debated in both biblical scholarship and south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. So much so in fact, that the discussion in some cases has become quite vicious involving personal attacks and accusations (see Davies 1999). There are two sides to this debate, the biblical scholars mentioned at the beginning of this section, who have been dubbed 'minimalists' or 'revisionists', and the proponents of the traditional standpoint, who are known as 'maximalists'. Finkelstein and Silberman's book comes as one of the first studies to attempt to tackle this debate from an archaeological point of view. While Finkelstein and Silberman do not appear to class themselves as 'revisionists' (see Finkelstein and Silberman 2001: 128-129), others clearly see their work as 'revolutionary', 'advanced', 'provocative', 'bold', and 'challenging' (see the reviews by Halpern, Spong, Freedman, and Cox on the back sleeve of Finkelstein and Silberman 2001). As one of the first publications to tackle this controversial discussion from an archaeological perspective, it is indeed a brave and important attempt. However, whether it is also as revolutionary, challenging, and advanced as it has been claimed requires further discussion.

It is interesting first of all to note the premise of Finkelstein and Silberman's book. Finkelstein and Silberman explicitly set out to see how the Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant does or does not relate to the biblical narratives. In other words, they make an implicit link between the Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant and the ancient Israel described in the Old Testament. Indeed, as the title of their book shows, they aim to use archaeology to 'unearth the bible' and the goal of their book is to present 'archaeology's new vision of ancient Israel and the origin of its sacred texts' (Finkelstein and Silberman 2001). Furthermore, they aim to use archaeology to gain new perspectives on 'ancient Israel and the birth of its sacred scriptures' (ibid.: 3), 'ancient Israelite society' (ibid.: v), and 'some of the most famous events and personalities mentioned in the Bible' (ibid.: 3). Their entire research agenda is thus determined by historical aims.

This is an important point, since Finkelstein is an eminent south Levantine Iron Age scholar who in south Levantine archaeological circles is seen as forward thinking, provocative, and revolutionary. Indeed, he has produced one of the first bodies of work to be critical of the traditional approach to archaeology and text in the Iron Age southern Levant (Finkelstein 1996; 1998; 1999). In addition, he has attempted to look beyond a site's biblical associations by incorporating settlement pattern studies, the analysis of faunal and botanical remains, demography, and so on (e.g. Finkelstein and Broschi 1992; Finkelstein and Na'aman 1994; Finkelstein 1995; 1997b; 1998). Similarly, Silberman represents one of the few authors to write critically about Iron Age archaeology in the southern

Levant, taking into account the religious, political, and ideological factors that have shaped it (e.g. Silberman 1982; 1989; 1990; 1991; 1993a; 1993b; 1993c; 1995; 1997). However, in what can be taken as their major statement of position concerning south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, it is clear that Finkelstein and Silberman's archaeological agenda is still firmly embedded within an historical paradigm.

These few initial observations thus illustrate that Finkelstein and Silberman's framework for archaeological research on the Iron Age remains of the southern Levant is entirely textual. The previous chapters of this thesis have shown the great extent to which such a framework has created problems for the practice of archaeology in the southern Levant, right through from excavation to recording, from analysis to interpretation, and even to publication. Furthermore, although Finkelstein and Silberman are undoubtedly much more critical in their approach to south Levantine Iron Age archaeology and the biblical texts than many previous scholars, specific examples from their book will be discussed below to illustrate that their archaeological approach to the material culture of the southern Levant and the biblical texts has essentially remained the same as the approaches that have been criticised in the present study. It will be demonstrated that their adherence to the textual framework provided by the Old Testament for their archaeological research means that their work is not revolutionary at all. Rather, it will be shown that their archaeological practices simply continue in the tradition of their predecessors and that by doing so they are perpetuating the generalised assumptions of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology that in Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 were shown to be extremely problematic.

Indeed, to return to the implicit link that Finkelstein and Silberman make between the Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant and the ancient Israel described in the Old Testament, Finkelstein and Silberman designate Iron Age remains as 'Israelite' throughout their book (e.g. Finkelstein and Silberman 2001: v, 101, 105, 107, 110, 118-119). This assumption immediately reflects a reading of the Bible rather than the archaeological remains available for interpretation. Indeed, how do Finkelstein and Silberman know that this material culture is 'Israelite'? As was discussed in Chapter 6, the relationship between ethnicity and material culture cannot be assumed in such a straightforward way. By identifying Iron Age archaeological evidence as ethnically 'Israelite', Finkelstein and Silberman illustrate their reliance on the biblical text for interpretation. Indeed, it demonstrates that their approach to archaeology still involves the conflation of historical and material evidence, with a particular view of ethnicity.

Indeed, by relying on historical sources to form a framework for research and by viewing material culture as an ethnic marker, Finkelstein and Silberman's work is clearly still informed by a direct

'ethno-historical' method (see Chapter 6.1.2). Indeed, historical sources are taken as the basis for a link between peoples and archaeological finds. An example of this is provided by the fact that Finkelstein and Silberman take as evidence for the 'Israelite' identity of the material culture in the early Iron Age the correlation they assume between tenth century archaeology and the period of the monarchies in the Bible. They feel that these biblical narratives demonstrate a clear notion of self-identity which they believe they can project back onto the early Iron Age. Indeed, they write that;

> 'Although there is no way to know if ethnic identities had been fully formed at this time [the early Iron Age], we identify these distinctive highland villages as "Israelite" since many of them were continuously occupied well into the period of the monarchies – an era from which we have abundant sources, both biblical and extra-biblical, testifying that their inhabitants consciously identified themselves as Israelites' (Finkelstein and Silberman 2001: 107).

This echoes the practices of archaeologists in the early twentieth century who attempted to trace particular groups of people back into prehistory on the basis of find associations and horizons starting from a point where it was assumed their presence could be documented by the synchronisation of archaeological and historical sources (see Sklenár 1983: 91; see also Chapter 6.1.2). Such an approach makes a number of questionable assumptions however. First, that it is possible to securely date biblical narratives to the tenth century. Second, that a common identity assumed to have been felt in the tenth century can be projected back onto people who lived two centuries earlier. And third, that the common identity expressed in the Old Testament applied to all people living in the southern Levant during the Iron Age.

Furthermore, by assuming that archaeological culture areas reflect past 'peoples' or ethnic groups mentioned in historical sources, the interpretation of groups of archaeological material is prescribed by the textual narratives. In other words, these groups of archaeological finds - or archaeological 'cultures' - are often interpreted according to the role prescribed for them by documentary history (see Shennan 1989a: 5; see also Chapters 4 and 6). By identifying the Iron Age archaeology they discuss with the 'Israelites' and 'ancient Israel', Finkelstein and Silberman therefore read into this material culture the whole story of the ancient Israel as found in the biblical narratives. It should be noted that this is not so much the case in the first two parts of the book, where the Exodus, 'Conquest', and Solomonic episodes in the history of Israel are discussed. Finkelstein and Silberman in fact interpret some of the archaeological remains thought to correspond to these events as contradicting the biblical narratives that describe them. However, in the third and last part of the book where Judah's growth to statehood and the Exile are investigated, this is no longer the case. From this point onwards, the Old Testament traditions are regarded as accurate by the authors (Finkelstein and Silberman 2001: 230) and the emphasis of the book turns to a précis of the biblical narratives, with hardly any discussion of archaeological findings. As the book progresses, this is

clearly shown by the decrease in the number of pages devoted to information derived from archaeological data, as opposed to information derived from the biblical narratives. In Part 1 of the book, 59 pages cover the biblical narratives and 61 pages the archaeological evidence. In Part 2 of the book, 35 pages cover the biblical narratives, and 38 pages are devoted to the archaeological data. In Part 3, the section that covers the post-Davidic kings to the exile, only 19 pages are dedicated to the archaeological evidence, while 61 pages cover the biblical narratives.

The archaeological evidence of the period for which they believe they have 'reliable' factual historical information is thus no longer as important as the information imparted by the biblical narratives. Indeed, as the page count above demonstrates, the archaeological evidence is hardly discussed because the texts are deemed to provide all the information that is necessary. This illustrates that from the beginning of the late eighth century BC, Finkelstein and Silberman read into this material culture the whole story imparted by the biblical narratives they assume correlate with this time period. By interpreting material culture through an historical framework, Finkelstein and Silberman thus still largely substitute the lives lived by people in the Iron Age southern Levant from the late eighth century with a paraphrase of the biblical narratives.

Their work therefore not only still falls into the theoretical framework of culture-history whose central tenets were shown to be highly questionable in Chapter 6, it illustrates the straight 'totalising transfer mode' that was critiqued in Chapter 5. Hence, despite Finkelstein and Silberman's more critical handling of the biblical and archaeological sources in the first two parts of the book, the last part of the book shows that their assumptions and methods have not really changed at all from those whose work they are attempting to move away from.

Indeed, as their view of the biblical texts that cover the time between the post-Davidic kings and the Exile shows, Finkelstein and Silberman's understanding of history and the relationship between historical texts and archaeology remains essentially the same as their predecessors'. Their assumption that the biblical narratives covering the time from the post-Davidic kings onwards are essentially accurate and truthful, whilst at the same time assuming that all the narratives that went before are inaccurate and fictional, reveals their positivistic sense of history in addition to a selective stance towards the texts. This is clearly illustrated in the following quote:

> 'A word should be said here about the treatment of the biblical materials. Some of our colleagues wonder how we can dismiss the historicity of one verse in the Bible (1 Kings 9:15) and accept the historicity of others – relating to Ahab's construction of the palace at Jezreel (1 Kings 21:1) and to the construction of the palace at Samaria by Omri (1 Kings 16:24). The answer has to do with methodology. The biblical material cannot be treated as a monolithic block. It does not require a take-all-or-leave-all attitude. Two centuries of modern biblical scholarship have shown us that the

> biblical material must be evaluated chapter by chapter and sometimes verse by verse. The Bible includes historical, non-historical, and quasi-historical materials, which sometimes appear very close to one another in the text. The whole essence of biblical scholarship is to *separate the historical parts from the rest of the text* according to linguistic, literary, and extra-biblical historical considerations. So, yes, one may doubt the historicity of one verse and accept the validity of another' (ibid.: 343-344; emphasis mine).

Clearly to Finkelstein and Silberman, the biblical texts contain 'certain historical kernels' (ibid.: 23) that can be separated out by assiduous academic work. In other words, they assume that the Bible contains elements of truth, so that 'fact' can be separated from 'fiction'. Indeed, as quoted at the beginning of this section, their goal is 'to attempt to separate history from legend' (ibid.: 3). It is on this basis that they argue that the early traditions of the Bible, such as the Exodus, the invasion of the Israelites, and even the Solomonic 'Golden Age', are fictive (ibid.: 118, 128, 141-145). However, after the reigns of Solomon and David, at the beginning of the late eighth century BC, they suddenly regard the Old Testament narratives as historically accurate. It is at this point that the narratives become history. Indeed, they state that '[t]here is no reason to doubt seriously the reliability of the biblical list of Davidic kings who ruled in Jerusalem over the centuries that followed the time of David and Solomon' (ibid.: 230). The increased reliance on the biblical sources in the third part of the book as indicated by the page count above illustrates this. The lingering 'positivism' in historical research that was critically discussed in Chapter 4 in relation to much of current biblical scholarship is thus also present in Finkelstein and Silberman's work.

As the discussion in Chapter 4 has shown however, recent scholarship has argued that it is no longer possible to simply scan narratives for the few useful facts that provide the basis for an expanded modern account, while discarding the rest of the narrative as unimportant, since any such 'facts' are so embedded in the representation, that it directs an interpretation of them. Furthermore, these observations not only undermine the distinction between fact and fiction as the basis for the idea of historical facts, they also undermine these 'realities' as foundations for generalisation. Since many factors may have shaped the work of ancient authors - including for example their personal views and their political, social, economic, and religious situation - it is not possible to extrapolate 'the general' from their personal account of events.

However, Finkelstein and Silberman clearly understand the biblical narratives and the Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant to represent one and the same thing (e.g. ibid.: v, 3). As was shown in Chapters 4 and 5 however, this assumption is highly problematic. The Old Testament provides *one particular* view of *a* past, and cannot be used as an interpretative framework for all material culture dated to the Iron Age in the southern Levant. This material culture will have been used by many different people, at different times, in different places, for different reasons and with

different meanings. It represents many different pasts, not just the one imparted by the Old Testament. To take one text, with one particular view, belonging to one particular group of people (or groups of people), and to impose that view of 'what happened' onto material culture - whilst at the same time assuming both a place and a time period as a setting for those happenings - is to conflate two different things: the world in the text and the world as lived by many different human beings in all its complexity in the past. In other words, the Old Testament writes about *a* past as it views it, but it should not be used as a means to interpret the Iron Age material culture of the southern Levant, since that material evidence may not have anything to do with what is being described in the texts. To presuppose that, is to conflate two entirely different things: 'biblical Israel' and the people who lived in the southern Levant during the Iron Age.

In addition to supplanting the lives of people in the south Levantine Iron Age by a paraphrase of the biblical narratives, Finkelstein and Silberman's positivistic approach to history also determines their research aims and the questions they ask of the archaeological evidence. Their stated aims in the introduction, to write the 'history of ancient Israel' and to 'construct a new history of ancient Israel [through the evidence of recent discoveries] in which some of the most famous events and personalities mentioned in the Bible play unexpectedly different roles' (ibid.: 3), illustrates that Finkelstein and Silberman's interests are dominated by political history in the tradition of German historiography that was discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. Indeed, the questions they ask of the archaeological data are dominated by the historiography of state idealism and centre on the great events, ideas, and personalities mentioned in the Old Testament. Like scholars in the early twentieth century, they therefore turn to archaeology to write the history of Israel by attempting to link sites into a particular political-historical narrative, in this case that provided by the Old Testament (see Chapters 4 and 5; see also Halsall 1997: 807; Andrén 1998). Their reliance on historical topography and their preoccupation with the correct dating of sites and strata is a case in point (see Chapters 2, 4, 5, and 6).

Indeed, throughout their book Finkelstein and Silberman still use historical topography to identify sites with towns mentioned in the Old Testament in order to date parts of the text and to thereby appropriate certain biblical events for particular sites. They use the identification of place names mentioned in the patriarchal narratives relating to the desert and surrounding wilderness for example, to confirm the date of the composition of those narratives in the seventh century (Finkelstein and Silberman 2001: 42). They write that;

> 'Genesis 14, the story of the great war waged by invaders from the north [...] with the kings of the cities of the plain is a unique source in Genesis, which may be dated to exilic or post-exilic times.

> But it provides interesting geographical information relevant only to the seventh BCE. "En-mishpat, that is, Kadesh" (Genesis 14:7) is most likely a reference to Kadesh-barnea, the great oasis in the south that would play an important role in the Exodus narratives. It is identified with Ein el-Qudeirat in eastern Sinai, a site that has been excavated and shown to have been occupied primarily in the seventh and early sixth century BCE. Likewise, the site referred to as Tamar in the same biblical verse should most probably be identified with Ein Haseva in the northern Arabah, where excavations have uncovered a large fortress that also functioned mainly in the Late Iron Age' (ibid.: 42).

There are many more examples of this interpretative technique employed to link the archaeology of this area to the political-historical narrative of the biblical texts. For example the identification of Tell ed-Duweir with Lachish (ibid.: 259-263), the identification of biblical Samaria (ibid.:180-183), the identification of the compound of Jezreel (ibid.: 186-187), the identification of Tel Miqne with Ekron (ibid.: 269-270), and so on and so forth. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 5, the problem with using 'identification' as an interpretative tool is not so much whether a particular site can or cannot be identified with one mentioned in the biblical texts, but more importantly that the events which the biblical narratives describe for that site then become 'what happened' at that site. Indeed, the only way in which these sites are discussed in Finkelstein and Silbermans's book is focused on classification (to assign it to the right 'archaeological culture' or indeed ethnic group) and chronology (to slot it into the right time frame for the narrative). Thus, the questions asked of the archaeological sites that have been excavated is not so much what the lives of people were like living at those settlements during the Iron Age. Rather, their questions are led by the historical-political narratives of the biblical text and revolve around whether these match with the excavated material. Examples of this are found throughout the book. For instance, the city of palaces at Megiddo is only discussed in terms of its correct chronological allocation (ibid.: 343), the same applies to the discussion of the Iron Age strata at Samaria (ibid.: 180-183), Lachish (ibid.: 259-263), and the Jezreel compound (ibid.: 186-187, 343). By continuing to use identification as an interpretative tool, archaeology thus still essentially illustrates the narrative in Finkelstein and Silberman's work.

In conclusion, it has been demonstrated on a number of different levels that Finkelstein and Silberman's work does not represent a break with the traditional methods of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, but instead forms a continuation of the problematic approaches that have been critiqued throughout this study. While it is undoubtedly true that their work is far more critical and self-reflexive than previous research, it has been shown above that it is still firmly placed within the brackets of traditional research practices. Therefore, despite the belief by many current scholars that dramatic shifts have taken/are taking place in the practice of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, and that Finkelstein and Silberman's book represents the revolutionary archaeological pinnacle of that development, it is clear that fundamental changes have not yet taken place. Indeed, while

Finkelstein and Silberman's book adds to the growing number of publications to challenge traditional conceptions of the Levantine Iron Age, it does not provide the groundbreaking challenge to methods and practice that is necessary for change.

9.5.2 Excavation, Recording, and Analysis

It is not only in the field of theory and interpretation that approaches have remained essentially the same as those practised in the early twentieth century. As one of the most recent Iron Age excavation projects to be undertaken in the southern Levant shows, the methods of excavation, recording, analysis, and interpretation are essentially the same as those practised by traditional biblical archaeology. The excavations at the site of Megiddo between 1992 and the present, under the direction of Finkelstein and Ussishkin (Finkelstein *et al.* 2000a), show that many of the methods employed are exactly the same as those employed by some of the very first Israeli excavations to be carried out at the height of traditional biblical archaeology (for example at Beersheba and Hazor; see Chapters 2 and 5).

Indeed, the excavation and recording system utilised at Megiddo is exactly the same as that described in the Beersheba and Gezer manuals discussed in Chapter 5. It is based on strata, loci, and baskets. As was shown in Chapter 5, this method is problematic in a number of ways, not least because it makes alternative interpretations of the excavated material virtually impossible and is impractible for current research interests in archaeology generally. What is commendable however, is that in the introduction to the reports the project aims as well as the excavation and recording methods are stated clearly (Finkelstein *et al.* 2000a: 3, 12).

Similar to the excavation and recording methods, the pottery analyses are exactly the same as those in the early reports discussed in Chapter 5. Indeed, only a selection of typologically significant types is included in the analysis, no fabric, decoration, or manufacturing analysis is presented, no quantification of the total assemblage and its components is included, the discussion only focuses on typology and chronology, no spatial or functional analysis of the pottery is attempted, and analyses regarding sherd weight by locus, breakage rates, E.V.E. calculations, deposition, etc. are not attempted.

Analyses of small finds are similarly lacking (i.e. no quantification of total finds, no spatial analysis, and no manufacturing or fabric analysis), although it should be added that the published small finds report was not complete at the time of going to press (Sass 2000: 349). In addition, chipped stone is strangely lacking in the small find catalogue. The faunal analysis carried out on

material from a series of Early Bronze Age contexts is up to date, but it is of note that it forms one of the very few collections of zoo-archaeological evidence from Israel (other important collections include Tel Dan [Wapnish and Hesse 1991] and Tel Arad [Sadeh 1988]) (Wapnish and Hesse 2000: 429). In addition, there is no discussion of sample retrieval. Fish bones are also analysed, but due to the fact that very little sieving was undertaken during excavation the composition of the assemblage is biased with the result that no overall conclusions could be inferred from this data (Lernau 2000: 463, 476). In addition, no information is provided on the loci of the samples. Although not mentioned in the article on the botanical remains, since sieving was not undertaken, it can also be assumed that the composition of the botanical assemblage in terms of seeds and grains is biased. However, no information is provided on the general methodology of sample retrieval, no locus numbers are provided for the samples, nor is any spatial analysis conducted. Molluscs are also analysed, but again no spatial analysis is included. This discussion thus clearly demonstrates that the excavation, recording, and analytical methods employed at the current Megiddo excavations have not changed significantly from projects carried out at the height of biblical archaeology.

Turning now from analysis to interpretation, Finkelstein and Ussishkin's concluding remarks reveal that very little real archaeological synthesis is achieved regarding the incorporation of the artifact analyses. The archaeological component of their conclusion consists mainly of a discussion of the changes in architecture through time, a discussion of the chronological significance of particular stratigraphical sequences, and how the pottery is related to that (Finkelstein and Ussishkin 2000: 576-602). In addition, the chronology of the site is still to a large extent determined by the correlation of particular strata and destructions attributed to historically recorded campaigns (ibid.: 598-599), and especially concerning the Iron Age, attempts are made to assess how the archaeology can be related to the biblical narratives (ibid.: 600). An attempt is not made to discuss what life would have been like for the people inhabiting the site during the various periods of its occupation. No mention whatsoever is made of the results of the artifactual, faunal and botanical, or any of the other analyses published in the same volume.

The other chapter that forms the concluding section to the Megiddo report, Halpern's chapter entitled 'Centre and Sentry: Megiddo's Role in Transit, Administration and Trade' (Halpern 2000: 535-575) does not include this information either. Halpern does however discuss to a greater extent what the results of the excavation mean in terms of the role Megiddo played economically, socially, and religiously in the region. It must be added however, that much of the interpretation regarding Iron Age Megiddo is derived from the biblical narratives and not from the data derived from the archaeological excavation and analyses published in the same volume (ibid.: 557-563). It is clear

therefore that the interpretative methods utilised at the Megiddo excavations have not significantly changed from those employed at much earlier projects (see Chapters 2 and 5 for comparison).

The discussion of the recently published Megiddo reports demonstrates that the excavation, recording, analytical, and interpretative methods employed at Megiddo have not changed significantly from the heyday of biblical archaeology. This is interesting in the light of recent opinion which perceives current Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant to have moved on from traditional methods by incorporating recent theoretical and methodological trends. Indeed, Finkelstein and Silberman claim that;

> '[b]y the 1970s [...] new trends began to influence the conduct of biblical archaeology and eventually to change its major focus and completely reverse the traditional relationship between artifact and biblical text. For the first time, archaeologists working in the lands of the Bible did not seek to use excavated finds as illustrations of the Bible; in a dramatic shift to the methods of the social sciences, they sought to examine the human realities that lay *behind* the text. In excavating ancient sites, emphasis was no longer put only on a site's biblical associations. Excavated artifacts, architecture, and settlement patterns, as well as animal bones, seeds, chemical analysis of soil samples, and long-term anthropological models drawn from many world cultures, became the keys to perceiving wider changes in the economy, political history, religious practices, population density, and the very structure of ancient Israelite society' (ibid.: 21-22).

While it is undoubtedly true that recent excavations have incorporated a number of new techniques and analyses (see Chapter 5), it has been shown in Chapter 5 and the discussion of the excavations at Megiddo above, that most Iron Age excavations are still firmly placed within the brackets of traditional research practices. The major changes in method since the 1970s claimed by recent opinion are therefore not apparent anywhere in south Levantine Iron Age scholarship.

Moreover, in comparison to projects carried out in other parts of the Middle East at the same time as the Megiddo excavations, or indeed many years earlier, this becomes even more clear. Indeed, recent projects in Cyprus such as the excavations at Marki Alonia conducted by Frankel between 1990 and 1994 (Frankel 1996), the excavations at Kissonerga-Mosphilia in Cyprus directed by Peltenburg between 1979 and 1992 (Peltenburg *et al.* 1998), and recent projects in Jordan such as the excavations at Shuna undertaken by Baird and Philip between 1991 and 1992 (Baird and Philip 1992; 1993), show what the possibilities are for the reconstruction of past life through archaeological remains.

Although the Shuna excavations have not yet been fully published, the preliminary reports show that the research strategy incorporated extensive sieving - allowing the retrieval of important data on fish bones - as well as comprehensive analysis of faunal and botanical remains, metalwork, chipped and ground stone, molluscs, and ceramics involving not only formal analysis, but also

manufacturing techniques, fabric analysis, spatial, functional and scientific analyses (see Baird and Philip 1992; 1993). Both the Marki Alonia and Kissonerga-Mosphilia excavations have been fully published and they too incorporate all the above-mentioned archaeological analyses in their reports. In addition, the research aims and objectives, as well as the layout of the reports have been well thought out. Indeed, concerning the Kissonerga-Mosphilia excavations, the overall project aims and objectives were incorporated into each of the separate archaeological or scientific analyses with an eye to the eventual archaeological synthesis to be presented in the overall conclusions of the excavation. In addition, at all of these sites, single context excavation was employed so that accurate stratigraphical reconstruction of the sites could be achieved. This not only makes it possible for current researchers to use the data from these reports for their own research aims, but it allows future researchers to re-use the data from these excavations when new methods of analysis and interpretation are inevitably introduced. Lastly, each of these projects and their published reports is concerned with the reconstruction of the lives of the people who inhabited these sites in the past. They use every available means to achieve this as accurately and in as much detail as possible. As a result, a very comprehensive and detailed picture emerges of the daily life of a Bronze Age community in Jordan, and of a Chalcolithic and a Neolithic community in Cyprus.

These few examples show that it is possible to apply up-to-date and innovative approaches to the archaeology of the Middle East. Furthermore, it demonstrates the wide variety of information that can be obtained through their application and their incorporation into the final conclusions of site reports that are concerned with approximating the daily lives led by people at these sites in the past. Until such approaches are adopted and/or modified for use in Iron Age excavations in the southern Levant, all we will ever have is a partial and incomplete picture of the lives lived by the people who inhabited the many and varied sites that constitute the south Levantine Iron Age. Moreover, until this happens, it will not be possible to tackle the numerous and varied problems of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology that scholars are slowly beginning to acknowledge.

9.6 Discussion and Conclusion

This chapter has shown that despite changing conceptions in south Levantine Iron Age archaeology, archaeological practices in this area are still fundamentally determined by the traditional historical research agenda described in Chapters 2 and 3. It has also shown that if archaeologists do not begin to try and change the way in which the archaeology of this region and period is approached, it will not be possible to address the problems that are increasingly being raised by those very same scholars. Indeed, the continuing lack of engagement with the nature of archaeological data, archaeological processes, and theoretical perspectives on human behaviour and archaeological

residues perpetuates the current problematic framework of archaeological research in this region. Due to its reliance on a series of questionable assumptions, this framework causes immense problems with chronology, material culture change, and interpretation, as well as great gaps in our knowledge of the lives led by people in the Iron Age southern Levant.

The aim of this chapter has therefore been to demonstrate the real potential of new and alternative approaches to the Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant and to thereby point the way for future research strategies. The analytical methods applied in Chapter 8 have highlighted the existence of significant diversity and complex patterning within the late Iron Age material culture of the southern Levant. The application of alternative methods of data analysis has thus undermined the traditional culture-historical interpretation of the material culture patterning in this area. Furthermore, this chapter has suggested that by approaching the archaeological evidence of the Iron Age southern Levant from a people-centred perspective, the material culture patterning we see can be understood as a result of social practice. Indeed, by focusing on the materiality of life, the central role of foodways and appropriation in the use of ceramics has been highlighted. As a result, it has been shown that the Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant has the potential to be viewed from new and alternative perspectives by being approached with current archaeological methods and theory. The conclusions drawn in this and the previous chapter have thus demonstrated the value and potential of new approaches to the archaeology of the southern Levant.

CHAPTER TEN

Conclusion

In the preceding chapters the theoretical approaches to archaeological interpretation that have been used to create and maintain current understandings of the south Levantine Iron Age have been critically assessed. In Chapter 2 an historiography of Iron Age archaeology in the southern Levant was presented. This illustrated that the archaeological investigation of this period and area began in a specific socio-political context. Furthermore, although scholars' views have changed through time, a number of ideas have always been, and remain, central to debates about the Iron Age in the southern Levant. Central to these ideas is the conflation of archaeological and historical information, along with a particular view of ethnicity. In Chapter 3, the archaeological study of 'Edom' and the 'Edomites' was placed into the overall framework of south Levantine Iron Age archaeological scholarship. This served to trace the origins and development of several ideas central to traditional conceptions of 'Edom' and the 'Edomites'. In Chapters 4 to 6 those key ideas were critiqued. In Chapter 4, drawing on recent theoretical developments, the historical basis of current understandings of the Iron Age archaeology of the southern Levant was questioned. The influence of this approach on the methods of excavation, analysis, and interpretation used in the southern Levant was investigated in Chapter 5 to show how these methods in turn have influenced current conceptions of the Levantine Iron Age. In Chapter 6 it was discussed that, in light of recent theories developed by social scientists, normative ideas relating to ethnicity and material culture are problematic. In Chapter 8 it was shown that the material evidence used to sustain current conceptions of the Levantine Iron Age do not support this view when different methods of analysis are used. On the basis of these chapters it was concluded that the relevance of ethnicity as a means of explaining material culture distributions in the Iron Age southern Levant must be questioned. Alternative understandings of the relevant archaeological evidence were presented in Chapter 9. It was suggested that material culture patterning once thought to show the presence of 'Edomite' people in the southern Levant, may instead be understood as a result of social practice. Indeed, by focusing on the materiality of life from a people-centred perspective, the central role of foodways and appropriation in the use of ceramics was highlighted. Having summarised the conclusions arising from the individual chapters, a number of general conclusions can now be presented, bringing together the central themes of the present study.

Firstly, while the distribution of what has traditionally been labelled as 'Edomite' pottery in the southern Levant cannot be disputed, it is clear that many of the ideas that have been central to its

interpretation cannot necessarily be accepted as 'facts'. For example, the existence of distinct bounded ethnic groups, such as the Edomites, Judahites, Israelites, and Moabites, must be doubted. It is equally questionable to claim that such groups can be identified through distinctive material culture remains. We must also question whether the available historical sources provide a relevant framework for the interpretation of archaeological evidence in the late Iron Age southern Levant. Furthermore, such conclusions mean that the evidence used to prove that the presence of the 'Edomites' was an historical 'fact' and an appropriate means of understanding late Iron Age material culture distributions in the southern Levant cannot be relied upon.

Secondly, the preceding chapters have highlighted how and why traditional interpretations of the Iron Age southern Levant achieved political, social, religious, and academic significance at certain times and for specific reasons. This in turn has led to a clearer understanding of how and why that narrative originated and became a powerful discourse that has been maintained and changed through time up to the present day. By discussing south Levantine Iron Age archaeology as part of an *historical* discourse stretching back at least 200 years, and as an *archaeological* discourse with its roots in the mid-nineteenth century, it has been possible to show that many of the presumed facts mentioned above only became 'facts' in specific contexts and for specific reasons. Their factual status is not a given, obvious attribute; it has been created and maintained by biblical scholars and archaeologists for a variety of reasons. Traditional understandings of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology therefore represent specific, historically contingent ways of approaching archaeological interpretation. By recognising the interpretation of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology as an on-going discourse this study demonstrates that an awareness of the influences and assumptions that influence our interpretations allows for a self-reflexive archaeology where new and alternative ideas can be successfully applied.

Chapters 8 and 9 of this thesis therefore attempted to demonstrate the potential of alternative ideas and methods to the interpretation of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. Indeed, a range of new approaches to material culture assemblages, in line with current archaeological thought, were presented. Quantified, contextual approaches from a people-centred perspective were discussed and, where possible, applied. In addition, it was considered how artefacts relate to identities or the expression of identities and how they may have been used in dynamic, perhaps localised social practices. These ideas could lead on to future considerations of what material remains might reveal about various long-term and short-term changes or continuities with regard to economies, land use, climate, and material culture availability, and whether these have any correlation with contemporary trends in the surrounding region.

By providing a critique of the archaeological practices that underpin current understandings of the south Levantine Iron Age, this study forms the archaeological counterpart to recent studies in biblical scholarship that have highlighted the problematic nature of current constructions of the Levantine Iron Age from a textual perspective. By using so-called 'Edomite' archaeology as a case-study to demonstrate that current interpretations of the Iron Age southern Levant are questionable, and that alternative analytical and interpretative approaches have real potential, the need for further detailed reappraisals of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology has been highlighted. Indeed, from the critique presented in this thesis, it is clear that the Iron Age archaeology in this area dated from the twelfth to eighth centuries BC still requires reassessment. Furthermore, while this study has exposed the underlying basis of existing approaches, a consideration of the reasons for the longevity of this traditional framework is necessary. Religion, Western national origin myths, Israeli nationalism, and nineteenth century politics and academia, have all been touched upon in this thesis as causative factors, but a detailed study of these issues and their relationship to the development of south Levantine Iron Age archaeology is essential. It is hoped that this thesis has demonstrated the need for such future studies by raising a range of theoretical and methodological problems with south Levantine Iron Age archaeology. Only by undertaking such studies will archaeologists come to recognise the ideas and assumptions that influence their interpretations. By raising awareness of these issues and by demonstrating the potential of alternative approaches, it is hoped that subsequent studies might investigate new ways of understanding the Iron Age southern Levant that do not rely on questionable assumptions.

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